JUDE THE OBSCURE

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"'I OUGHT NOT TO BE BORN, OUGHT I?'"

Jude the Obscure

BY

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VOL. I

ILLUSTRATED

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PREFACE

THE history of this novel (whose birth in its present shape has been much retarded by the necessities of periodical publication) is briefly as follows. The scheme was jotted down in 1890, from notes made in 1887 and onward, some of the circumstances being suggested by the death of a woman in the former year. The scenes were revisited in October, 1892; the narrative was written in outline in 1892 and the spring of 1893, and at full length, as it now appears, from August, 1893, onward into the next year; the whole, with the exception of a few chapters, being in the hands of the publisher by the end of 1894. It was begun as a serial story in HARPER'S MAGAZINE at the end of November, 1894, and was continued in monthly parts.

But, as in the case of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, the magazine version was, for various reasons, abridged and modified in some degree, the present edition being the first in which the whole appears as originally written. And in the difficulty of coming to an early decision in the matter of a title, the tale was issued under a provisional name—two such titles having, in fact, been successively adopted. The present and final title, deemed on the whole the best, was one of the earliest thought of.

For a novel addressed by a man to men and women of full age, which attempts to deal unaffectedly with the fret and fever, derision and disaster, that may press in the wake of the strongest passion known to humanity, and to point, without a mincing of words, the tragedy of unfulfilled aims, I am not aware that there is anything in the handling to which exception can be taken.

Like former productions of this pen, *Jude the Obscure* is simply an endeavor to give shape and coherence to a series of seemings, or personal impressions, the question of their consistency or their discordance, of their permanence or their transitoriness, being regarded as not of the first moment.

T. H.

August, 1895.

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PART I

AT MARYGREEN

"Yea, many there be that have run out of their wits for women, and become servants for their sakes. Many also have perished, have erred, and sinned, for women. . . . O ye men, how can it be but women should be strong, seeing they do thus?"—ESDRAS.

I

THE school-master was leaving the village, and everybody seemed sorry. The miller at Cresscombe lent him the small white tilted cart and horse to carry his goods to the city of his destination, about twenty miles off, such a vehicle proving of quite sufficient size for the departing teacher's effects. For the school-house had been partly furnished by the managers, and the only cumbersome article possessed by the master, in addition to the packing-case of books, was a cottage piano that he had bought at an auction during the year in which he thought of learning instrumental music. But the enthusiasm having waned, he had never acquired any skill in playing, and the purchased article had been a perpetual trouble to him ever since in moving house.

The rector had gone away for the day, being a man who disliked the sight of changes. He did not mean to return till the evening, when the new school-teacher would have arrived and settled in, and everything would be smooth again.

The blacksmith, the farm bailiff, and the school-master himself were standing in perplexed attitudes in the parlor before the instrument. The master had remarked that even if he got it into the cart he should not know what to do with it on his arrival at Christminster, the city he was bound for, since he was only going into temporary lodgings just at first.

A little boy of eleven, who had been thoughtfully assisting in the packing, joined the group of men, and as they rubbed their chins he spoke up, blushing at the sound

of his own voice: "Aunt hev got a great fuel-house, and it could be put there, perhaps, till you've found a place to settle in, sir."

"A proper good notion," said the blacksmith.

It was decided that a deputation should wait on the boy's aunt—an old maiden resident—and ask her if she would house the piano till Mr. Phillotson should send for it. The smith and the bailiff started to see the practicability of the suggested shelter, and the boy and the schoolmaster were left standing alone.

"Sorry I am going, Jude?" asked the latter, kindly.

Tears rose into the boy's eyes, for he was not among the regular day scholars, who came unromantically close to the school-master's life, but one who had attended the night school only during the present teacher's term of office. The regular scholars, if the truth must be told, stood at the present moment afar off, like certain historic disciples, indisposed to any enthusiastic volunteering of aid.

The boy awkwardly opened the book he held in his hand, which Mr. Phillotson had bestowed on him as a parting gift, and admitted that he was sorry.

"So am I," said Mr. Phillotson.

"Why do you go, sir?" asked the boy.

"Ah—that would be a long story. You wouldn't understand my reasons, Jude. You will, perhaps, when you are older."

"I think I should now, sir."

"Well—don't speak of this everywhere. You know what a university is, and a university degree? It is the necessary hall-mark of a man who wants to do anything in teaching. My scheme, or dream, is to be a university graduate, and then to be ordained. By going to live at Christminster, or near it, I shall be at headquarters, so to speak, and if my scheme is practicable at all, I consider that being on the spot will afford me a better chance of carrying it out than I should have elsewhere."

The smith and his companion returned. Old Miss Fawley's fuel-house was dry, and eminently practicable; and she seemed willing to give the instrument standing-room there. It was accordingly left in the school till the evening, when more hands would be available for removing it, and the school-master gave a final glance around.

The boy Jude assisted in loading some small articles, and at nine o'clock Mr. Phillotson mounted beside his box of books and other *impedimenta*, and bade his friends good-bye.

"I sha'n't forget you, Jude," he said, smiling, as the cart moved off. "Be a good boy, remember; and be kind to animals and birds, and read all you can. And if ever you come to Christminster, remember you hunt me out for old acquaintance' sake."

The cart creaked across the green, and disappeared round the corner by the rectory-house. The boy returned to the draw-well at the edge of the greensward, where he had left his buckets when he went to help his patron and teacher in the loading. There was a quiver in his lip now, and after opening the well-cover to begin lowering the bucket, he paused and leaned with his forehead and arms against the frame-work, his face wearing the fixity of a thoughtful child's who has felt the pricks of life somewhat before his time. The well into which he was looking was as ancient as the village itself, and from his present position appeared as a long circular perspective ending in a shining disk of quivering water at a distance of a hundred feet. There was a lining of green moss near the top, and nearer still the hart's-tongue fern.

He said to himself, in the melodramatic tones of a whimsical boy, that the school-master had drawn at that well scores of times on a morning like this, and would never draw there any more. "I've seen him look down into it, when he was tired with his drawing, just as I do now, and when he rested a bit before carrying the buckets

home! But he was too clever to bide here any longer—a small sleepy place like this!"

A tear rolled from his eye into the depths of the well. The morning was a little foggy, and the boy's breathing unfurled itself as a thicker fog upon the still and heavy air. His thoughts were interrupted by a sudden outcry:

"Bring on that water, will ye, you idle young harlican!"

It came from an old woman who had emerged from her door towards the garden-gate of a green-thatched cottage not far off. The boy quickly waved a signal of assent, drew the water with what was a great effort for one of his stature, landed and emptied the big bucket into his own pair of smaller ones, and pausing a moment for breath, started with them across the patch of clammy greensward whereon the well stood—nearly in the centre of the little village, or rather hamlet.

It was as old-fashioned as it was small, and it rested in the lap of an undulating upland adjoining the North Wessex downs. Old as it was, however, the well-shaft was probably the only relic of the local history that remained absolutely unchanged. Many of the thatched and dormered dwelling-houses had been pulled down of late years, and many trees felled on the green. Above all, the original church, hump-backed, wood-turreted, and quaintly hipped, had been taken down, and either cracked up into heaps of road-metal in the lane, or utilized as pig-sty walls, garden seats, guard-stones to fences, and rockeries in the flower-beds of the neighborhood. In place of it a tall new building of German-Gothic design, unfamiliar to English eyes, had been erected on a new piece of ground by a certain obliterator of historic records who had run down from London and back in a day. The site whereon so long had stood the ancient temple to the Christian divinities was not even recorded on the green and level grass-plot that had immemorially been the churchyard, the obliterated graves being commemorated by ninepenny cast-iron crosses warranted to last five years.

II

SLENDER as was Jude Fawley's frame, he bore the two brimming house-buckets of water to the cottage without resting. Over the door was a little rectangular piece of blue board, on which was painted in yellow letters, "Drusilla Fawley, Baker." Within the little lead panes of the window—this being one of the few old houses left—were five bottles of sweets, and three buns on a plate of the willow pattern.

While emptying the buckets at the back of the house he could hear an animated conversation in progress within-doors between his great-aunt, the Drusilla of the sign-board, and some other villagers. Having seen the schoolmaster depart, they were summing up particulars of the event, and indulging in predictions of his future.

"And who's he?" asked one, comparatively a stranger, when the boy entered.

"Well ye med ask it, Mrs. Williams. He's my great-nephew—come since you was last this way." The old inhabitant who answered was a tall, gaunt woman, who spoke tragically on the most trivial subject, and gave a phrase of her conversation to each auditor in turn. "He come from Mellstock, down in South Wessex, about a year ago—worse luck for 'n, Belinda" (turning to the right), "where his father was living, and was took wi' the shakings for death, and died in two days, as you know, Caroline" (turning to the left). "It would ha' been a blessing if Goddy-mighty had took thee too, wi' thy mother and father, poor useless boy! But I've got him here to stay with me till I can see what's to be done with

un, though I be obliged to let him earn any penny he can. Just now he's a-scaring of birds for Farmer Troutham. It keeps un out of mischty. Why do ye turn away, Jude?" she continued, as the boy, feeling the impact of their glances like slaps upon his face, moved aside.

The local washer-woman replied that it was perhaps a very good plan of Miss or Mrs. Fawley's (as they called her indifferently) to have him with her—"to kip 'ee company in your loneliness, fetch water, shet the winder-shetters o' nights, and help in the bit o' baking."

Miss Fawley doubted it. . . . "Why didn't ye get the school-master to take 'ee to Christminster wi' un, and make a scholar of 'ee," she continued, in frowning pleasantry. "I'm sure he couldn't ha' took a better one. The boy is crazy for books, that he is. It runs in our family rather. His cousin Sue is just the same—so I've heard; but I have not seen the chile for years, though she was born in this place, within these four walls, as it happened. My niece and her husband, after they were married, didn' get a house of their own for some year or more; and then they only had one till— Well, I won't go into that. Jude, my chile, don't *you* ever marry. 'Tisn't for the Fawleys to take that step any more. She, their only one, was like a chile o' my own, Belinda, till the split come! Ah, that a little maid should know such changes!"

Jude, finding the general attention again centring on himself, went out to the bakehouse, where he ate the cake provided for his breakfast. The end of his spare time had now arrived, and emerging from the garden by getting over the hedge at the back, he pursued a path northward, till he came to a wide and lonely depression in the general level of the upland, which was sown as a cornfield. This vast concave was the scene of his labors for Mr. Troutham, the farmer, and he descended into the midst of it.

The brown surface of the field went right up towards the sky all round, where it was lost by degrees in the mist

that shut out the actual verge and accentuated the solitude. The only marks on the uniformity of the scene were a rick of last year's produce standing in the midst of the arable, the rooks that rose at his approach, and the path athwart the fallow by which he had come, trodden now by he hardly knew whom, though once by many of his own dead family.

"How ugly it is here!" he murmured.

The fresh harrow-lines seemed to stretch like the channellings in a piece of new corduroy, lending a meanly utilitarian air to the expanse, taking away its gradations, and depriving it of all history beyond that of the few recent months, though in every clod and stone there really lingered associations enough and to spare—echoes of songs from ancient harvest-days, of spoken words, and of sturdy deeds. Every inch of ground had been the site, first or last, of energy, gayety, horse-play, bickerings, weariness. Groups of gleaners had squatted in the sun on every square yard. Love-matches that had populated the adjoining hamlet had been made up there between reaping and carrying. Under the hedge which divided the field from a distant plantation girls had given themselves to lovers who would not turn their heads to look at them by the next harvest; and in that ancient cornfield many a man had made love-promises to a woman at whose voice he had trembled by the next seed-time after fulfilling them in the church adjoining. But this neither Jude nor the rooks around him considered. For them it was a lonely place, possessing, in the one view, only the quality of a work-ground, and in the other that of a granary good to feed in.

The boy stood under the rick before mentioned, and every few seconds used his clacker or rattle briskly. At each clack the rooks left off pecking, and rose and went away on their leisurely wings, burnished like tassets of mail, afterwards wheeling back and regarding him warily, and descending to feed at a more respectful distance.

He sounded the clacker till his arm ached, and at length his heart grew sympathetic with the birds' thwarted desires. They seemed, like himself, to be living in a world which did not want them. Why should he frighten them away? They took upon them more and more the aspect of gentle friends and pensioners—the only friends he could claim as being in the least degree interested in him, for his aunt had often told him that she was not. He ceased his rattling, and they alighted anew.

"Poor little dears!" said Jude, aloud. "You *shall* have some dinner—you shall. There is enough for us all. Farmer Troutham can afford to let you have some. Eat, then, my dear little birdies, and make a good meal!"

They stayed and ate, inky spots on the nut-brown soil, and Jude enjoyed their appetite. A magic thread of fellow-feeling united his own life with theirs. Puny and sorry as those lives were, they much resembled his own.

His clacker he had by this time thrown away from him, as being a mean and sordid instrument, offensive both to the birds and to himself as their friend. All at once he became conscious of a smart blow upon his buttocks, followed by a loud clack, which announced to his surprised senses that the clacker had been the instrument of offence used. The birds and Jude started up simultaneously, and the dazed eyes of the latter beheld the farmer in person, the great Troutham himself, his red face glaring down upon Jude's cowering frame, the clacker swinging in his hand.

"So it's 'Eat, my dear birdies,' is it, young man? 'Eat, dear birdies,' indeed! I'll tickle your breeches, and see if you say, 'Eat, dear birdies,' again in a hurry! And you've been idling at the school-master's too, instead of coming here, ha'n't ye, hey? That's how you earn your sixpence a day for keeping the rooks off my corn!"

Whilst saluting Jude's ears with this impassioned rhetoric, Troutham had seized his left hand with his own left, and swinging his slim frame round him at arm's-length,

again struck Jude on the hind parts with the flat side of Jude's own rattle, till the field echoed with the blows, which were delivered once or twice at each revolution.

"Don't 'ee, sir—please don't 'ee!" cried the whirling child, as helpless under the centrifugal tendency of his person as a hooked fish swinging to land, and beholding the hill, the rick, the plantation, the path, and the rooks going round and round him in an amazing circular race. "I—I—sir—only meant that—there was a good crop in the ground—I saw 'em sow it—and the rooks could have a little bit for dinner—and you wouldn't miss it, sir—and Mr. Phillotson said I was to be kind to 'em—oh, oh, oh!"

This truthful explanation seemed to exasperate the farmer even more than if Jude had stoutly denied saying anything at all; and he still smacked the whirling urchin, the clacks of the instrument continuing to resound all across the field, and as far as the ears of distant workers—who gathered thereupon that Jude was pursuing his business of clacking with great assiduity—and echoing from the brand-new church tower just behind the mist, towards the building of which structure the farmer had largely subscribed, to testify his love for God and man.

Presently Troutham grew tired of his punitive task, and depositing the quivering boy on his legs, took a sixpence from his pocket and gave it him in payment for his day's work, telling him to go home and never let him see him in one of those fields again.

Jude leaped out of arm's reach and walked along the trackway weeping—not from the pain, though that was keen enough; not from the perception of the flaw in the terrestrial scheme, by which what was good for God's birds was bad for God's gardener; but with the awful sense that he had wholly disgraced himself before he had been a year in the parish, and hence might be a burden to his great-aunt for life.

With this shadow on his mind he did not care to show himself in the village, and went homeward by a round-

about track behind a high hedge and across a pasture. Here he beheld scores of coupled earthworms lying half their length on the surface of the damp ground, as they always did in such weather at that time of the year. It was impossible to advance in regular steps without crushing some of them at each tread.

Though Farmer Troutham had just hurt him, he was a boy who could not himself bear to hurt anything. He had never brought home a nest of young birds without lying awake in misery half the night after, and often reinstating them and the nest in their original place the next morning. He could scarcely bear to see trees cut down or lopped, from a fancy that it hurt them; and late pruning, when the sap was up and the tree bled profusely, had been a positive grief to him in his infancy. This weakness of character, as it may be called, suggested that he was the sort of man who was born to ache a good deal before the fall of the curtain upon his unnecessary life should signify that all was well with him again. He carefully picked his way on tiptoe among the earthworms without killing a single one.

On entering the cottage he found his aunt selling a penny loaf to a little girl, and when the customer was gone she said, "Well, how do you come to be back here in the middle of the morning like this?"

"I'm turned away."

"What?"

"Mr. Troutham have turned me away because I let the rooks have a few peckings of corn. And there's my wages—the last I shall ever hae!"

He threw the sixpence tragically on the table.

"Ah!" said his aunt, suspending her breath. And she opened upon him a lecture on how she would now have him all the spring upon her hands doing nothing. "If you can't skeer birds, what can ye do? There! don't ye look so deedy! Farmer Troutham is not so much better than myself, come to that. But 'tis as Job said, 'Now

they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.' His father was my father's journeyman, anyhow, and I must have been a fool to let 'ee go to work for 'n, which I shouldn't ha' done but to keep 'ee out of mischty."

More angry with Jude for demeaning her by coming there than for dereliction of duty, she rated him primarily from that point of view, and only secondarily from a moral one.

"Not that you should have let the birds eat what Farmer Troutham planted. Of course you was wrong in that. Jude, Jude, why didstn't go off with that school-master of thine to Christminster or somewhere? But, oh no—poor or'nary child—there never was any sprawl on thy side of the family, and never will be!"

"Where is this beautiful city aunt—this place where Mr. Phillotson is gone to?" asked the boy, after meditating in silence.

"Lord! you ought to know where the city of Christminster is. Near a score of miles from here. It is a place much too good for you ever to have much to do with, poor boy, I'm a-thinking."

"And will Mr. Phillotson always be there?"

"How can I tell?"

"Couldn't I go to see him?"

"Lord, no! You didn't grow up hereabout, or you wouldn't ask such as that. We've never had anything to do with folk in Christminster, nor folk in Christminster with we."

Jude went out, and, feeling more than ever his existence to be an undemanded one, he lay down upon his back on a heap of litter near the pig-sty. The fog had by this time become more translucent, and the position of the sun could be seen through it. He pulled his straw hat over his face, and peered through the interstices of the plaiting at the white brightness, vaguely reflecting.

Growing up brought responsibilities, he found. Events did not rhyme quite as he had thought. Nature's logic was too horrid for him to care for. That mercy towards one set of creatures was cruelty towards another sickened his sense of harmony. As you got older, and felt yourself to be at the centre of your time, and not at a point in its circumference, as you had felt when you were little, you were seized with a sort of shuddering, he perceived. All around you there seemed to be something glaring, garish, rattling, and the noises and glares hit upon the little cell called your life, and shook it, and scorched it.

If he could only prevent himself growing up! He did not want to be a man.

Then, like the natural boy, he forgot his despondency, and sprang up. During the remainder of the morning he helped his aunt, and in the afternoon, when there was nothing more to be done, he went into the village. Here he asked a man whereabouts Christminster lay.

"Christminster? Oh, well, out by there yonder; though I've never bin there — not I. I've never had any business at such a place."

The man pointed northeastward, in the very direction where lay that field in which Jude had so disgraced himself. There was something unpleasant about the coincidence for the moment, but the fearsomeness of this fact rather increased his curiosity about the city. The farmer had said he was never to be seen in that field again; yet Christminster lay across it, and the path was a public one. So, stealing out of the hamlet, he descended into the same hollow which had witnessed his punishment in the morning, never swerving an inch from the path, and climbing up the long and tedious ascent on the other side, till the track joined the highway by a little clump of trees. Here the ploughed land ended, and all before him was bleak open down.

III

Not a soul was visible on the hedgeless highway, or on either side of it, and the white road seemed to ascend and diminish till it joined the sky. At the very top it was crossed at right angles by a green "ridgeway"—the Icknield Street and original Roman road through the district. This ancient track ran east and west for many miles, and down almost to within living memory had been used for driving flocks and herds to fairs and markets. But it was now neglected and overgrown.

The boy had never before strayed so far north as this from the nestling hamlet in which he had been deposited by the carrier from a railway-station southward, one dark evening some few months earlier, and till now he had had no suspicion that such a wide, flat, low-lying country lay so near at hand, under the very verge of his upland world. The whole northern semicircle between east and west, to a distance of forty or fifty miles, spread itself before him; a bluer, moister atmosphere, evidently, than that he breathed up here.

Not far from the road stood a weather-beaten old barn of reddish-gray brick and tile. It was known as the Brown House by the people of the locality. He was about to pass it, when he perceived a ladder against the eaves; and the reflection that the higher he got the further he could see led Jude to stand and regard it. On the slope of the roof two men were repairing the tiling. He turned into the ridgeway and drew towards the barn.

When he had wistfully watched the workmen for some

time he took courage, and ascended the ladder till he stood beside them.

"Well, my lad, and what may you want up here?"

"I wanted to know where the city of Christminster is, if you please."

"Christminster is out across there, by that clump. You can see it—at least you can on a clear day. Ah, no, you can't now."

The other tiler, glad of any kind of diversion from the monotony of his labor, had also turned to look towards the quarter designated. "You can't often see it in weather like this," he said. "The time I've noticed it is when the sun is going down in a blaze of flame, and it looks like—I don't know what."

"The heavenly Jerusalem," suggested the serious urchin.

"Ay—though I should never ha' thought of it myself. . . . But I can't see no Christminster to-day."

The boy strained his eyes also; yet neither could he see the far-off city. He descended from the barn, and, abandoning Christminster with the versatility of his age, he walked along the ridge-track, looking for any natural objects of interest that might lie in the banks thereabout. When he repassed the barn to go back to Marygreen he observed that the ladder was still in its place, but that the men had finished their day's work and gone away.

It was waning towards evening; there was still a faint mist, but it had cleared a little except in the damper tracts of subjacent country and along the river-courses. He thought again of Christminster, and wished, since he had come two or three miles from his aunt's house on purpose, that he could have seen for once this attractive city of which he had been told. But even if he waited here it was hardly likely that the air would clear before night. Yet he was loath to leave the spot, for the northern expanse became lost to view on retreating towards the village only a few hundred yards.

He ascended the ladder to have one more look at the point the men had designated, and perched himself on the highest rung, overlying the tiles. He might not be able to come so far as this for many days. Perhaps if he prayed, the wish to see Christminster might be forwarded. People said that if you prayed things sometimes came to you, even though they sometimes did not. He had read in a tract that a man who had begun to build a church, and had no money to finish it, knelt down and prayed, and the money came in by the next post. Another man tried the same experiment, and the money did not come; but he found afterwards that the breeches he knelt in were made by a wicked Jew. This was not discouraging, and turning on the ladder Jude knelt on the third rung, where, resting against those above it, he prayed that the mist might rise.

He then seated himself again and waited. In the course of ten or fifteen minutes the thinning mist dissolved altogether from the eastern horizon, as it had already done elsewhere, and about a quarter of an hour before the time of sunset the westward clouds parted, the sun's position being partially uncovered, and the beams streaming out in visible lines between two bars of slaty cloud. The boy immediately looked back in the old direction.

Some way within the limits of the stretch of landscape points of light like the topaz gleamed. The air increased in transparency with the lapse of minutes, till the topaz points showed themselves to be the vanes, windows, wet roof slates, and other shining spots upon the spires, domes, freestone-work, and varied outlines that were faintly revealed. It was Christminster, unquestionably; either directly seen, or miraged in the peculiar atmosphere.

The spectator gazed on and on till the windows and vanes lost their shine, going out almost suddenly like extinguished candles. The vague city became veiled in

mist. Turning to the west, he saw that the sun had disappeared. The foreground of the scene had grown funereally dark, and near objects put on the hues and shapes of chimæras.

He anxiously descended the ladder and started homeward at a run, trying not to think of giants, Herne the Hunter, Apollyon lying in wait for Christian, or of the captain with the bleeding hole in his forehead, and the corpses round him that remutinied every night on board the bewitched ship. He knew that he had grown out of belief in these horrors, yet he was glad when he saw the church tower and the lights in the cottage windows, even though this was not the home of his birth, and his great-aunt did not care much about him.

Inside and roundabout that old woman's "shop" window, with its twenty-four little panes set in lead work, the glass of some of them oxidized with age, so that you could hardly see the poor penny articles exhibited within, and forming part of a stock which a strong man could have carried, Jude had his outer being for some long tideless time. But his dreams were as gigantic as his surroundings were small.

Through the solid barrier of cold cretaceous upland to the northward he was always beholding a gorgeous city —the fancied place he had likened to the new Jerusalem, though there was perhaps more of the painter's imagination and less of the diamond merchant's in his dreams thereof than in those of the Apocalyptic writer. And the city acquired a tangibility, a permanence, a hold on his life, mainly from the one nucleus of fact that the man for whose knowledge and purposes he had so much reverence was actually living there; not only so, but living among the more thoughtful and mentally shining ones therein.

In sad wet seasons, though he knew it must rain at Christminster too, he could hardly believe that it rained

so drearily there. Whenever he could get away from the confines of the hamlet for an hour or two, which was not often, he would steal off to the Brown House on the hill and strain his eyes persistently; sometimes to be rewarded by the sight of a dome or spire, at other times by a little smoke, which in his estimate had some of the mysticism of incense.

Then the day came when it suddenly occurred to him that if he ascended to the point of view after dark, or possibly went a mile or two farther, he would see the night lights of the city. It would be necessary to come back alone, but even that consideration did not deter him, for he could throw a little manliness into his mood, no doubt.

The project was duly executed. It was not late when he arrived at the place of outlook, only just after dusk; but a black northeast sky, accompanied by a wind from the same quarter, made the occasion dark enough. He was rewarded; but what he saw was not the lamps in rows, as he had half expected. No individual light was visible, only a halo or glow-fog overarching the place against the black heavens behind it, making the light and the city seem distant but a mile or so.

He set himself to wonder on the exact point in the glow where the school-master might be—he who never communicated with anybody at Marygreen now; who was as if dead to them here. In the glow he seemed to see Phillotson promenading at ease, like one of the forms in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace.

He had heard that breezes travelled at the rate of ten miles an hour, and the fact now came into his mind. He parted his lips as he faced the northeast, and drew in the wind as if it were a sweet liquor.

"You," he said, addressing the breeze caressingly, "were in Christminster city between one and two hours ago, floating along the streets, pulling round the weather-cocks, touching Mr. Phillotson's face, being breathed by

him, and now you be here, breathed by me—you, the very same."

Suddenly there came along this wind something towards him—a message from the place—from some soul residing there, it seemed. Surely it was the sound of bells, the voice of the city, faint and musical, calling to him, "We are happy here!"

He had become entirely lost to his bodily situation during this mental leap, and only got back to it by a rough recalling. A few yards below the brow of the hill on which he paused a team of horses made its appearance, having reached the place by dint of half an hour's serpentine progress from the bottom of the immense declivity. They had a load of coals behind them—a fuel that could only be got into the upland by this particular route. They were accompanied by a carter, a second man, and a boy, who now kicked a large stone behind one of the wheels, and allowed the panting animals to have a long rest, while those in charge took a flagon off the load and indulged in a drink round.

They were elderly men, and had genial voices. Jude addressed them, inquiring if they had come from Christminster.

"Heaven forbid, with this load!" said they.

"The place I mean is that one yonder." He was getting so romantically attached to Christminster that, like a young lover alluding to his mistress, he felt bashful at mentioning its name again. He pointed to the light in the sky—hardly perceptible to their older eyes.

"Yes. There do seem a spot a bit brighter in the nor'-east than elsewhere, though I shouldn't ha' noticed it myself, and no doubt it med be Christminster."

Here a little book of tales which Jude had tucked up under his arm, having brought them to read on his way hither before it grew dark, slipped and fell into the road. The carter eyed him while he picked it up and straightened the leaves.

"Ah, young man," he observed, "you'd have to get your head screwed on t'other way before you could read what they read there."

"Why?" asked the boy.

"Oh, they never look at anything that folks like we can understand," the carter continued, by way of passing the time. "On'y foreign tongues used before the Flood, when no two families spoke alike. They read that sort of thing as fast as a night-hawk will whir. 'Tis all learning there—nothing but learning, except religion. And that's learning, too, for I never could understand it. Yes, 'tis a serious-minded place. Not but there's wenches in the streets o' nights. . . . You know, I suppose, that they raise pa'sons there like radishes in a bed? And though it do take—how many years, Bob?—five years to turn a lirruping hobble-de-hoy chap into a solemn preaching man with no corrupt passions, they'll do it, if it can be done, and polish un off like the workmen they be, and turn un out wi' a long face, and a long black coat and waistcoat, and a religious collar and hat, same as they used to wear in the Scriptures, so that his own mother wouldn't know un sometimes. . . . There, 'tis their business, like anybody else's."

"But how should you know—"

"Now don't you interrupt, my boy. Never interrupt your senyers. Move the fore hoss aside, Bobby; here's som'at coming. . . . You must mind that I be a-talking of the college life. 'Em lives on a lofty level; there's no gainsaying it, though I myself med not think much of 'em. As we be here in our bodies on this high ground, so be they in their minds—noble-minded men enough, no doubt—some on 'em—able to earn hundreds by thinking out loud. And some on 'em be strong young fellows that can earn a'most as much in silver cups. As for music, there's beautiful music everywhere in Christminster. You med be religious, or you med not, but you can't help striking in your homely

note with the rest. And there's a street in the place — the main street — that ha'n't another like it in the world. I should think I did know a little about Christminster!"

By this time the horses had recovered breath and bent to their collars again. Jude, throwing a last adoring look at the distant halo, turned and walked beside his remarkably well-informed friend, who had no objection to tell him as they moved on more yet of the city — its towers and halls and churches. The wagon turned into a cross-road, whereupon Jude thanked the carter warmly for his information, and said he only wished he could talk half as well about Christminster as he.

"Well, 'tis oonly what has come in my way," said the carter, unboastfully. "I've never been there, no more than you; but I've picked up the knowledge here and there, and you be welcome to it. A-getting about the world as I do, and mixing with all classes of society, one can't help hearing of things. A friend o' mine, that used to clane the boots at the Crozier Hotel in Christminster when he was in his prime, why, I knowed un as well as my own brother in his later years."

Jude continued his walk homeward alone, pondering so deeply that he forgot to feel timid. He suddenly grew older. It had been the yearning of his heart to find something to anchor on, to cling to — for some place which he could call admirable. Should he find that place in this city if he could get there? Would it be a spot in which, without fear of farmers, or hinderance, or ridicule, he could watch and wait, and set himself to some mighty undertaking like the men of old of whom he had heard? As the halo had been to his eyes when gazing at it a quarter of an hour earlier, so was the spot mentally to him as he pursued his dark way.

"It is a city of light," he said to himself.

"The tree of knowledge grows there," he added, a few steps farther on.

"It is a place that teachers of men spring from and go to."

"It is what you may call a castle, manned by scholarship and religion."

After this figure he was silent a long while, till he added,

"It would just suit me."

IV

WALKING somewhat slowly, by reason of his concentration, the boy—an ancient man in some phases of thought, much younger than his years in others — was overtaken by a light-footed pedestrian, whom, notwithstanding the gloom, he could perceive to be wearing an extraordinarily tall hat, a swallow-tailed coat, and a watch-chain that danced madly and threw around scintillations of sky-light as its owner swung along upon a pair of thin legs and noiseless boots. Jude, beginning to feel lonely, endeavored to keep up with him.

"Well, my man! I'm in a hurry, so you'll have to walk pretty fast if you keep alongside of me. Do you know who I am?"

"Yes, I think. Physician Vilbert?"

"Ah — I'm known everywhere, I see! That comes of being a public benefactor."

Vilbert was an itinerant quack-doctor, well known to the rustic population, and absolutely unknown to anybody else, as he, indeed, took care to be, to avoid inconvenient investigations. Cottagers formed his only patients, and his Wessex-wide repute was among them alone. His position was humbler and his field more obscure than those of the quacks with capital and an organized system of advertising. He was, in fact, a survival. The distances he traversed on foot were enormous, and extended nearly the whole length and breadth of Wessex. Jude had one day seen him selling a pot of colored lard to an old woman as a certain cure for a bad leg, the woman arranging to pay a guinea, in instalments of a shilling a fortnight,

for the precious salve, which, according to the physician, could only be obtained from a particular animal which grazed on Mount Sinai, and was to be captured only at great risk to life and limb. Jude, though he already had his doubts about this gentleman's medicines, felt him to be unquestionably a travelled personage, and one who might be a trustworthy source of information on matters not strictly professional.

"I s'pose you've been to Christminster, Physician?"

"I have — many times," replied the long thin man. "That's one of my centres."

"It's a wonderful city for scholarship and religion?"

"You'd say so, my boy, if you'd seen it. Why, the very sons of the old women who do the washing of the college can talk in Latin—not good Latin, that I admit, as a critic: dog-Latin—cat-Latin, as we used to call it in my undergraduate days."

"And Greek?"

"Well—that's more for the men who are in training for bishops, that they may be able to read the New Testament in the original."

"I want to learn Latin and Greek myself."

"A lofty desire. You must get a grammar of each tongue."

"I mean to go to Christminster some day."

"Whenever you do, you say that Physician Vilbert is the only proprietor of those celebrated pills that infallibly cure all disorders of the alimentary system, as well as asthma and shortness of breath. Two and threepence a box—specially licensed by the government stamp."

"Can you get me the grammars if I promise to say it hereabout?"

"I'll sell you mine with pleasure — those I used as a student."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" said Jude, gratefully, but in gasps, for the amazing speed of the physician's walk kept him in a dog-trot which was giving him a stitch in the side.

"I think you'd better drop behind, my young man. Now I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll get you the grammars, and give you a first lesson, if you'll remember, at every house in the village, to recommend Physician Vilbert's golden ointment, life-drops, and female pills."

"Where will you be with the grammars?"

"I shall be passing here this day fortnight at precisely this hour of five-and-twenty minutes past seven. My movements are as truly timed as those of the planets in their courses."

"Here I'll be to meet you," said Jude.

"With orders for my medicines?"

"Yes, Physician."

Jude then dropped behind, waited a few minutes to recover breath, and went home with a consciousness of having struck a blow for Christminster.

Through the intervening fortnight he ran about and smiled outwardly at his inward thoughts, as if they were people meeting and nodding to him — smiled with that singularly beautiful irradiation which is seen to spread on young faces at the inception of some glorious idea, as if a supernatural lamp were held inside their transparent natures, giving rise to the flattering fancy that heaven lies about them then.

He honestly performed his promise to the man of many cures, in whom he now sincerely believed, walking miles hither and thither among the surrounding hamlets as the physician's agent in advance. On the evening appointed he stood motionless on the plateau, at the place where he had parted from Vilbert, and there awaited his approach. The road physician was fairly up to time; but, to the surprise of Jude on striking into his pace, which the pedestrian did not diminish by a single unit of force, the latter seemed hardly to recognize his young companion, though with the lapse of the fortnight the evenings had grown light. Jude thought it might perhaps be owing to his wearing another hat, and he saluted the physician with dignity.

"Well, my boy?" said the latter, abstractedly.

"I've come," said Jude.

"You? who are you? Oh yes—to be sure! Got any orders, lad?"

"Yes." And Jude told him the names and addresses of the cottagers who were willing to test the virtues of the world-renowned pills and salve. The quack mentally registered these with great care.

"And the Latin and Greek grammars?" Jude's voice trembled with anxiety.

"What about them?"

"You were to bring me yours, that you used before you took your degree."

"Ah, yes, yes! Forgot all about it—all! So many lives depending on my attention, you see, my man, that I can't give so much thought as I would like to other things."

Jude controlled himself sufficiently long to make sure of the truth; and he repeated, in a voice of dry misery, "You haven't brought 'em!"

"No. But you must get me some more orders from sick people, and I'll bring the grammars next time."

Jude dropped behind. He was an unsophisticated boy, but the gift of sudden insight, which is sometimes vouchsafed to children, showed him all at once what shoddy humanity the quack was made of. There was to be no intellectual light from this source. The leaves dropped from his imaginary crown of laurel; he turned to a gate, leaned against it, and cried bitterly.

The disappointment was followed by an interval of blankness. He might, perhaps, have obtained grammars from Alfredston, but to do that required money, and a knowledge of what books to order; and though physically comfortable, he was in such absolute dependence as to be without a farthing of his own.

At this date Mr. Phillotson sent for his pianoforte, and it gave Jude a lead. Why should he not write to the school-master, and ask him to be so kind as to get him the

grammars in Christminster? He might slip a letter inside the case of the instrument, and it would be sure to reach the desired eyes. Why not ask him to send any old second-hand copies, which would have the charm of being mellowed by the university atmosphere?

To tell his aunt of his intention would be to defeat it. It was necessary to act alone.

After a further consideration of a few days he did act, and on the day of the piano's departure, which happened to be his next birthday, clandestinely placed the letter inside the packing-case, directed to his much-admired friend, being afraid to reveal the operation to his aunt Drusilla, lest she should discover his motive, and compel him to abandon his scheme.

The piano was despatched, and Jude waited days and weeks, calling every morning at the cottage post-office before his great-aunt was stirring. At last a packet did indeed arrive at the village, and he saw from the ends of it that it contained two thin books. He took it away into a lonely place, and sat down on a felled elm to open it.

Ever since his first ecstasy or vision of Christminster and its possibilities, Jude had meditated much and curiously on the probable sort of process that was involved in turning the expressions of one language into those of another. He concluded that a grammar of the required tongue would contain, primarily, a rule, prescription, or clew of the nature of a secret cipher, which, once known, would enable him, by merely applying it, to change at will all words of his own speech into those of the foreign one. His childish idea was, in fact, a pushing to the extremity of mathematical precision what is everywhere known as Grimm's Law—an aggrandizement of rough rules to ideal completeness. Thus he assumed that the words of the required language were always to be found somewhere latent in the words of the given language by those who had the art to uncover them, such art being furnished by the books aforesaid.

When, therefore, having noted that the packet bore the postmark of Christminster, he cut the string, opened the volumes, and turned to the Latin grammar, which chanced to come uppermost, he could scarcely believe his eyes.

The book was an old one—thirty years old, soiled, scribbled wantonly over with a strange name in every variety of enmity to the letter-press, and marked at random with dates twenty years earlier than his own day. But this was not the cause of Jude's amazement. He learned for the first time that there was no law of transmutation, as in his innocence he had supposed (there was, in some degree, but the grammarian did not recognize it), but that every word in both Latin and Greek was to be individually committed to memory at the cost of years of plodding.

Jude flung down the books, lay backward along the broad trunk of the elm, and was an utterly miserable boy for the space of a quarter of an hour. As he had often done before, he pulled his hat over his face and watched the sun peering insidiously at him through the interstices of the straw. This was Latin and Greek, then, was it, this grand delusion! The charm he had supposed in store for him was really a labor like that of Israel in Egypt.

What brains they must have in Christminster and the great schools, he presently thought, to learn words one by one up to tens of thousands! There were no brains in his head equal to this business; and as the little sun-rays continued to stream in through his hat at him, he wished he had never seen a book, that he might never see another, that he had never been born.

Somebody might have come along that way who would have asked him his trouble, and might have cheered him by saying that his notions were further advanced than those of his grammarian. But nobody did come, because nobody does; and under the crushing recognition of his gigantic error Jude continued to wish himself out of the world.

V

During the three or four succeeding years a quaint and singular vehicle might have been discerned moving along the lanes and by-roads near Marygreen, driven in a quaint and singular way.

In the course of a month or two after the receipt of the books, Jude had grown callous to the shabby trick played him by the dead languages. In fact, his disappointment at the nature of those tongues had, after a while, been the means of still further glorifying the erudition of Christminster. To acquire languages, departed or living, in spite of such obstinacies as he now knew them inherently to possess, was a herculean performance which gradually led him on to a greater interest in it than in the presupposed patent process. The mountain-weight of material under which the ideas lay in those dusty volumes called the classics piqued him into a dogged, mouselike subtlety of attempt to move it piecemeal.

He had endeavored to make his presence tolerable to his crusty maiden aunt by assisting her to the best of his ability, and the business of the little cottage bakery had grown in consequence. An aged horse with a hanging head had been purchased for eight pounds at a sale, a creaking cart with a whity-brown tilt obtained for a few pounds more, and in this turnout it became Jude's business thrice a week to carry loaves of bread to the villagers and solitary cotters immediately around Marygreen.

The singularity aforesaid lay, after all, less in the conveyance itself than in Jude's manner of conducting it along its route. Its interior was the scene of most of

Jude's education by "private study." As soon as the horse had learned the road and the houses at which he was to pause a while, the boy, seated in front, would slip the reins over his arm, ingeniously fix open, by means of a strap attached to the tilt, the volume he was reading, spread the dictionary on his knees, and plunge into the simpler passages from Cæsar, Virgil, or Horace, as the case might be, in his purblind stumbling way, and with an expenditure of labor that would have made a tender-hearted pedagogue shed tears; yet somehow getting at the meaning of what he read, and divining rather than beholding the spirit of the original, which often to his mind was something else than that which he was taught to look for.

The only copies he had been able to lay hands on were old Delphine editions, because they were superseded, and therefore cheap. But, bad for idle school-boys, it did so happen that they were passably good for him. The hampered and lonely itinerant conscientiously covered up the marginal readings, and used them merely on points of construction, as he would have used a comrade or tutor who should have happened to be passing by. And though Jude may have had little chance of becoming a scholar by these rough-and-ready means, he was in the way of getting into the groove he wished to follow.

While he was busied with these ancient pages, which had already been thumbed by hands possibly in the grave, digging out the thoughts of these minds, so remote, yet so near, the bony old horse pursued his rounds, and Jude would be aroused from the woes of Dido by the stoppage of his cart and the voice of some old woman crying, "Two to-day, baker, and I return this stale one."

He was frequently met in the lanes by pedestrians and others without his seeing them, and by degrees the people of the neighborhood began to talk about his method of combining work and play (such they considered his reading to be), which, though probably convenient enough to

himself, was not altogether a safe proceeding for other travellers along the same roads. There were murmurs. Then a private resident of an adjoining place informed the local policeman that the baker's boy should not be allowed to read while driving, and insisted that it was the constable's duty to catch him in the act, and take him to the police court at Alfredston, and get him fined for dangerous practices on the highway. The policeman thereupon lay in wait for Jude, and one day accosted him and cautioned him.

As Jude had to get up at three o'clock in the morning to heat the oven, and mix and set in the bread that he distributed later in the day, he was obliged to go to bed at night immediately after laying the sponge; so that if he could not read his classics on the highways, he could hardly study at all. The only thing to be done was, therefore, to keep a sharp eye ahead and around him as well as he could in the circumstances, and slip away his books as soon as anybody loomed in the distance, the policeman in particular. To do that official justice, he did not put himself much in the way of Jude's bread-cart, considering that in such a lonely district the chief danger was to Jude himself, and often on seeing the white tilt over the hedges he would move in another direction.

On a day when Fawley was getting quite advanced, being now about sixteen, and had been stumbling through the "Carmen Sæculare," on his way home he found himself to be passing over the high edge of the plateau by the Brown House. The light had changed, and it was the sense of this which had caused him to look up. The sun was going down, and the full moon was rising simultaneously behind the woods in the opposite quarter. His mind had become so impregnated with the poem that, in a moment of the same impulsive emotion which years before had caused him to kneel on the ladder, he stopped the horse, alighted, and glancing round to see that nobody was in sight, knelt down on the road-side bank with open

book. He turned first to the shiny goddess, who seemed to look so softly and critically at his doings, then to the disappearing luminary on the other hand, as he began:

"Phœbe, silvarumque potens Diana!"

The horse stood still till he had finished the hymn, which Jude repeated under the sway of a polytheistic fancy that he would never have thought of humoring in broad daylight.

Reaching home, he mused over his curious superstition, innate or acquired, in doing this, and the strange forgetfulness which had led to such a lapse from commonsense and custom in one who wished, next to being a scholar, to be a Christian divine. It had all come of reading heathen works exclusively. The more he thought of it, the more convinced he was of his inconsistency. He began to wonder whether he could be reading quite the right books for his object in life. Certainly there seemed little harmony between this pagan literature and the mediæval colleges at Christminster, that ecclesiastical romance in stone.

Ultimately he decided that in his sheer love of reading he had taken up a wrong emotion for a Christian young man. He had dabbled in Homer, but had never yet worked much at the New Testament in the Greek, though he possessed a copy, obtained by post from a second-hand bookseller. He abandoned the now familiar Ionic for a new dialect, and for a long time onward limited his reading almost entirely to the Gospels and Epistles in Griesbach's text. Moreover, on going into Alfredston one day, he was introduced to patristic literature by finding at the bookseller's some volumes of the Fathers which had been left behind by an insolvent clergyman of the neighborhood.

As another outcome of this change of groove, he vis-

ited on Sundays all the churches within a walk, and deciphered the Latin inscriptions on fifteenth-century brasses and tombs. On one of these pilgrimages he met with a hunchbacked old woman of great intelligence, who read everything she could lay her hands on, and she told him more yet of the romantic charms of the city of light and lore. Thither he resolved as firmly as ever to go.

But how live in that city? At present he had no income at all. He had no trade or calling of any dignity or stability whatever on which he could subsist while carrying out an intellectual labor which might spread over many years.

What was most required by citizens? Food, clothing, and shelter. An income from any work in preparing the first would be too meagre; for making the second he felt a distaste; the preparation of the third requisite he inclined to. They built in a city; therefore he would learn to build. He thought of his unknown uncle, his cousin Susanna's father, an ecclesiastical worker in metal, and somehow mediæval art in any material was a trade for which he had rather a fancy. He could not go far wrong in following his uncle's footsteps, and engaging himself a while with the carcasses that contained the scholar souls.

As a preliminary he obtained some small blocks of freestone, metal not being available, and suspending his studies a while, occupied his spare half-hours in copying the heads and capitals in his parish church.

There was a stone-cutter of a humble kind in Alfredston, and as soon as he had found a substitute for himself in his aunt's little business, he offered his services to this man for a trifling wage. Here Jude had the opportunity of learning at least the rudiments of freestone-working. Some time later he went to a church-builder in the same place, and under the architect's direction became handy at restoring the dilapidated masonries of several village churches roundabout.

Not forgetting that he was only following up this handicraft as a prop to lean on while he prepared those greater engines which he flattered himself would be better fitted for him, he yet was interested in his pursuit on its own account. He now had lodgings during the week in the little town, whence he returned to Marygreen village every Saturday evening. And thus he reached and passed his nineteenth year.

VI

At this memorable date of his life he was, one Saturday, returning from Alfredston to Marygreen about three o'clock in the afternoon. It was fine, warm, and soft summer weather, and he walked with his tools at his back, his little chisels clinking faintly against the larger ones in his basket. It being the end of the week he had left work early, and had come out of the town by a roundabout route which he did not usually frequent, having promised to call at a flour-mill in that direction to execute a commission for his aunt.

He was in an enthusiastic mood. He seemed to see his way to living comfortably in Christminster in the course of a year or two, and knocking at the doors of one of those strongholds of learning of which he had dreamed so much. He might, of course, have gone there now, in some capacity or other, but he preferred to enter the city with a little more assurance as to means than he could be said to feel at present. A warm self-content suffused him when he considered what he had already done. Now and then as he went along he turned to face the peeps of country on either side of him. But he hardly saw them; the act was an automatic repetition of what he had been accustomed to do when less occupied; and the one matter which really engaged him was the mental estimate of his progress thus far.

"I have acquired quite an average student's power to read the common ancient classics, Latin in particular." This was true, Jude possessing a facility in that language which enabled him with great ease to himself

to beguile his lonely walks by imaginary conversations therein.

"I have read two books of Homer, besides being pretty familiar with passages such as the speech of Phœnix in the ninth book, the fight of Hector and Ajax in the fourteenth, the appearance of Achilles unarmed and his heavenly armor in the eighteenth, and the funeral games in the twenty-third. I have also done some Hesiod, a little scrap of Thucydides, and a lot of the Greek Testament. . . . I wish there was only one dialect, all the same.

"I have done some mathematics, including the first six and the eleventh and twelfth books of Euclid; and algebra as far as simple equations.

"I know something of the Fathers, and something of Roman and English history.

"These things are only a beginning. But I shall not make much further advance here, from the difficulty of getting books. Hence I must next concentrate all my energies on settling in Christminster. Once there I shall so advance, with the assistance I shall there get, that my present knowledge will appear to me but as childish ignorance. I must save money, and I will; and one of those colleges shall open its doors to me—shall welcome whom now it would spurn, if I wait twenty years for the welcome.

"I'll be D.D. before I have done!"

And then he continued to dream, and thought he might become even a bishop by leading a pure, energetic, wise, Christian life. And what an example he would set! If his income were £5000 a year, he would give away £4500 in one form and another, and live sumptuously (for him) on the remainder. Well, on second thoughts, a bishop was absurd. He would draw the line at an archdeacon. Perhaps a man could be as good and as learned and as useful in the capacity of archdeacon as in that of bishop. Yet he thought of the bishop again.

"Meanwhile I will read, as soon as I am settled in

Christminster, the books I have not been able to get hold of here: Livy, Tacitus, Herodotus, Æschylus, Sophocles, Aristophanes—"

"Ha, ha, ha! Hoity-toity!" The sounds were expressed in light voices on the other side of the hedge, but he did not notice them. His thoughts went on:

"—Euripides, Plato, Aristotle, Lucretius, Epictetus, Seneca, Antoninus. Then I must master other things: the Fathers thoroughly; Bede and ecclesiastical history generally; a smattering of Hebrew—I only know the letters as yet—"

"Hoity-toity!"

"—but I can work hard. I have staying power in abundance, thank God! and it is that which tells. . . . Yes, Christminster shall be my Alma Mater; and I'll be her beloved son, in whom she shall be well pleased."

In his deep concentration on these transactions of the future, Jude's walk had slackened, and he was now standing quite still, looking at the ground as though the future were thrown thereon by a magic lantern. On a sudden something smacked him sharply in the ear, and he became aware that a soft cold substance had been flung at him, and had fallen at his feet.

A glance told him what it was — a piece of flesh, the characteristic part of a barrow-pig, which the countrymen used for greasing their boots, as it was useless for any other purpose. Pigs were rather plentiful hereabout, being bred and fattened in large numbers in certain parts of North Wessex.

On the other side of the hedge was a stream, whence, as he now for the first time realized, had come the slight sounds of voices and laughter that had mingled with his dreams. He mounted the bank and looked over the fence. On the farther side of the stream stood a small homestead, having a garden and pig-sties attached; in front of it, beside the brook, three young women were kneeling, with buckets and platters beside them contain-

"THREE YOUNG WOMEN WERE KNEELING"

ing heaps of pigs' chitterlings, which they were washing in the running water. One or two pairs of eyes slyly glanced up, and perceiving that his attention had at last been attracted, and that he was watching them, they braced themselves for inspection by putting their mouths demurely into shape and recommencing their rinsing operations with assiduity.

"Thank you!" said Jude, severely.

"I *didn't* throw it, I tell you!" asserted one girl to her neighbor, as if unconscious of the young man's presence.

"Nor I," the second answered.

"Oh, Anny, how can you!" said the third.

"If I had thrown anything at all, it shouldn't have been such an indecent thing as that!"

"Pooh! I don't care for him!" And they laughed and continued their work, without looking up, still ostentatiously accusing each other.

Jude grew sarcastic as he wiped the spot where the clammy flesh had struck him.

"*You* didn't do it—oh no!" he said to the up-stream one of the three.

She whom he addressed was a fine dark-eyed girl, not exactly handsome, but capable of passing as such at a little distance, despite some coarseness of skin and fibre. She had a round and prominent bosom, full lips, perfect teeth, and the rich complexion of a Cochin hen's egg. She was a complete and substantial female human — no more, no less; and Jude was almost certain that to her was attributable the enterprise of throwing the lump of offal at him, the bladder from which she had obviously just cut it off lying close beside her.

"That you'll never be told," said she, deedily.

"Whoever did it was wasteful of other people's property."

"Oh, that's nothing. The pig is my father's."

"But you want it back, I suppose?"

"Oh yes; if you like to give it me."

"Shall I throw it across, or will you come to the plank above here for me to hand it to you?"

Perhaps she foresaw an opportunity; for somehow or other the eyes of the brown girl rested in his own when he had said the words, and there was a momentary flash of intelligence, a dumb announcement of affinity *in posse*, between herself and him, which, so far as Jude Fawley was concerned, had no sort of premeditation in it. She saw that he had singled her out from the three, as a woman is singled out in such cases, for no reasoned purpose of further acquaintance, but in commonplace obedience to conjunctive orders from headquarters, unconsciously received by unfortunate men when the last intention of their lives is to be occupied with the feminine.

Springing to her feet, she said: "Don't throw it! Give it to me."

Jude was now aware that the intrinsic value of the missile had nothing to do with her request. He set down his basket of tools, raked out with his stick the slip of flesh from the ditch, and got over the hedge. They walked in parallel lines, one on each bank of the stream, towards the small plank bridge. As the girl drew nearer to it she gave, without Jude perceiving it, an adroit little suck to the interior of each of her cheeks in succession, by which curious and original manœuvre she brought as by magic upon its smooth and rotund surface a perfect dimple, which she was able to retain there as long as she continued to smile. This production of dimples at will was a not unknown operation, which many attempted, but only a few succeeded in accomplishing.

They met in the middle of the plank, and Jude held out his stick with the fragment of pig dangling therefrom, looking elsewhere the while, and faintly coloring.

She, too, looked in another direction, and took the piece as though ignorant of what her hand was doing. She hung it temporarily on the rail of the bridge, and

then, by a species of mutual curiosity, they both turned, and regarded it.

"You don't think I threw it?"

"Oh no!"

"It belongs to father, and he med have been in a taking if he had wanted it. He makes it into dubbin."

"What made either of the others throw it, I wonder?" Jude asked, politely accepting her assertion, though he had very large doubts as to its truth.

"Impudence. Don't tell folk it was I, mind!"

"How can I? I don't know your name."

"Ah, no. Shall I tell it to you?"

"Do!"

"Arabella Donn. I'm living here."

"I must have known it if I had often come this way. But I mostly go straight along the high-road."

"My father is a pig-breeder, and these girls are helping me wash the innerds for black-puddings and chitterlings."

They talked a little more and a little more, as they stood regarding the limp object dangling across the hand-rail of the bridge. The unvoiced call of woman to man, which was uttered very distinctly by Arabella's personality, held Jude to the spot against his intention—almost against his will, and in a way new to his experience. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that till this moment Jude had never looked at a woman to consider her as such, but had vaguely regarded the sex as beings outside his life and purposes. He gazed from her eyes to her mouth, thence to her bosom, and to her full round naked arms, wet, mottled with the chill of the water, and firm as marble.

"What a nice-looking girl you are!" he murmured, though the words had not been necessary to express his sense of her magnetism.

"Ah, you should see me Sundays!" she said, piquantly.

"I don't suppose I could?" he answered.

"That's for you to think on. There's nobody after

me just now, though there med be in a week or two." She had spoken this without a smile, and the dimples disappeared.

Jude felt himself drifting strangely, but could not help it. "Will you let me?"

"I don't mind."

By this time she had managed to get back one dimple by turning her face aside for a moment and repeating the odd little sucking operation before mentioned, Jude being still unconscious of more than a general impression of her appearance. "Next Sunday?" he hazarded. "To-morrow, that is?"

"Yes."

"Shall I call?"

"Yes."

She brightened with a little glow of triumph, swept him almost tenderly with her eyes in turning, and throwing the offal out of the way upon the grass, rejoined her companions.

Jude Fawley shouldered his tool-basket and resumed his lonely way, filled with an ardor at which he mentally stood at gaze. He had just inhaled a single breath from a new atmosphere, which had evidently been hanging round him everywhere he went, for he knew not how long, but had somehow been divided from his actual breathing as by a sheet of glass. The intentions as to reading, working, and learning, which he had so precisely formulated only a few minutes earlier, were suffering a curious collapse into a corner, he knew not how.

"Well, it's only a bit of fun," he said to himself, faintly conscious that to common-sense there was something lacking, and still more obviously something redundant, in the nature of this girl who had drawn him to her, which made it necessary that he should assert mere sportiveness on his part as his reason in seeking her—something in her quite antipathetic to that side of him which had been occupied with literary study and the

magnificent Christminster dream. It had been no vestal who chose *that* missile for opening her attack on him. He saw this with his intellectual eye, just for a short fleeting while, as by the light of a falling lamp one might momentarily see an inscription on a wall before being enshrouded in darkness. And then this passing discriminative power was withdrawn, and Jude was lost to all conditions of things in the advent of a fresh and wild pleasure, that of having found a new channel for emotional interest hitherto unsuspected, though it had lain close beside him. He was to meet this enkindling one of the other sex on the following Sunday.

Meanwhile the girl had joined her companions, and she silently resumed her flicking and sousing of the chitterlings in the pellucid stream.

"Catched un, my dear?" laconically asked the girl called Anny.

"I don't know. I wish I had thrown something else than that!" regretfully murmured Arabella.

"Lord! he's nobody, though you med think so. He used to drive old Drusilla Fawley's bread-cart out at Marygreen, till he 'prenticed himself at Alfredston. Since then he's been very stuck up, and always reading. He wants to be a scholar, they say."

"Oh, I don't care what he is, or anything about 'n. Don't you think it, my child!"

"Oh, don't 'ee! You needn't try to deceive us! What did you stay talking to him for, if you didn't want un? Whether you do or whether you don't, he's as simple as a child. I could see it as you courted on the bridge, wi' that piece o' the pig hanging between ye—haw-haw! What a proper thing to court over! Well, he's to be had by any woman who can get him to care for her a bit, if she likes to set herself to catch him the right way."

VII

THE next day Jude Fawley was pausing in his bedroom with the sloping ceiling, looking at the books on the table, and then at the black mark on the plaster above them, made by the smoke of his lamp in past months.

It was Sunday afternoon, four-and-twenty hours after his meeting with Arabella Donn. During the whole bygone week he had been resolving to set this afternoon apart for a special purpose—the re-reading of his Greek Testament—his new one, with better type than his old copy, following Griesbach's text as amended by numerous correctors, and with variorum readings in the margin. He was proud of the book, having obtained it by boldly writing to its London publisher, a thing he had never done before.

He had anticipated much pleasure in this afternoon's reading, under the quiet roof of his great-aunt's house as formerly, where he now slept only two nights a week. But a new thing, a great hitch, had happened yesterday in the gliding and noiseless current of his life, and he felt as a snake must feel who has sloughed off its winter skin, and cannot understand the brightness and sensitiveness of its new one.

He would not go out to meet her, after all. He sat down, opened the book, and with his elbows firmly planted on the table and his hands to his temples, began at the beginning.

Η ΚΑΙΝΗ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ.

* * * * * *

Had he promised to call for her? Surely he had! She would wait in-doors, poor girl, and waste all her afternoon on account of him. There was a something in her, too, which was very winning, apart from promises. He ought not to break faith with her. Even though he had only Sundays and week-day evenings for reading, he could afford one afternoon, seeing that other young men afforded so many. After to-day he would never probably see her again. Indeed, it would be impossible, considering what his plans were.

In short, as if materially, a compelling arm of extraordinary muscular power seized hold of him — something which had nothing in common with the spirits and influences that had moved him hitherto. This seemed to care little for his reason and his will, nothing for his so-called elevated intentions, and moved him along, as a violent school-master a school-boy he has seized by the collar, in a direction which tended towards the embrace of a woman for whom he had no respect, and whose life had nothing in common with his own except locality.

Η ΚΑΙΝΗ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ was suddenly closed, and the predestinate Jude sprang up and across the room. Foreseeing such an event, he had already arrayed himself in his best clothes. In three minutes he was out of the house and descending by the path across the wide vacant hollow of corn-ground which lay between the village and the isolated house of Arabella in the dip beyond the upland.

As he walked he looked at his watch. He could be back in two hours, easily, and a good long time would still remain to him for reading after tea.

Passing the few unhealthy fir-trees and cottage where the path joined the highway he hastened along, and struck away to the left, descending the steep side of the country to the west of the Brown House. Here at the base of the chalk formation he neared the brook that oozed from it, and followed the stream till he reached her dwelling. A smell of piggeries came from the back,

and the grunting of the originators of that smell. He entered the garden, and knocked at the door with the knob of his stick.

Somebody had seen him through the window, for a male voice on the inside said:

"Arabella! Here's your young man come coorting! Mizzle, my girl!"

Jude winced at the words. Courting in such a business-like aspect as it evidently wore to the speaker was the last thing he was thinking of. He was going to walk with her, perhaps kiss her; but "courting" was too coolly purposeful to be anything but repugnant to his ideas. The door was opened and he entered, just as Arabella came down-stairs in full walking attire.

"Take a chair, Mr. What's-your-name?" said her father, an energetic, black-whiskered man, in the same business-like tones Jude had heard from outside.

"I'd rather go out at once, wouldn't you?" she whispered to Jude.

"Yes," said he. "We'll walk up to the Brown House and back; we can do it in half an hour."

Arabella looked so handsome amid her untidy surroundings that he felt glad he had come, and all the misgivings vanished that had hitherto haunted him.

First they clambered to the top of the great down, during which ascent he had occasionally to take her hand to assist her. Then they bore off to the left along the crest into the ridgeway, which they followed till it intersected the high-road at the Brown House aforesaid, the spot of his former fervid desires to behold Christminster. But he forgot them now. He talked the commonest local twaddle to Arabella with greater zest than he would have felt in discussing all the philosophies with all the Dons in the recently adored University, and passed the spot where he had knelt to Diana and Phœbus without remembering that there were any such people in the mythology, or that the sun was anything else than a useful lamp for illu-

minating Arabella's face. An indescribable lightness of heel served to lift him along; and Jude, the incipient scholar, prospective D.D., Professor, Bishop, or what not, felt himself honored and glorified by the condescension of this handsome country wench in agreeing to take a walk with him in her Sunday frock and ribbons.

They reached the Brown House barn — the point at which he had planned to turn back. While looking over the vast northern landscape from this spot, they were struck by the rising of a dense volume of smoke from the neighborhood of the little town which lay beneath them at a distance of a couple of miles.

"It is a fire," said Arabella. "Let's run and see it—do! It is not far!"

The tenderness which had grown up in Jude's bosom left him no will to thwart her inclination now — which pleased him in affording him excuse for a longer time with her. They started off down the hill almost at a trot; but on gaining level ground at the bottom, and walking a mile, they found that the spot of the fire was much farther off than it had seemed.

Having begun their journey, however, they pushed on; but it was not till five o'clock that they found themselves on the scene—the distance being altogether about half a dozen miles from Marygreen, and three from Arabella's. The conflagration had been got under by the time they reached it, and after a short inspection of the melancholy ruins they retraced their steps—their course lying through the town of Alfredston.

Arabella said she would like some tea, and they entered an inn of an inferior class and gave their order. As it was not for beer, they had a long time to wait. The maid-servant recognized Jude, and whispered her surprise to her mistress in the background, that he, the student, "who kept hisself up so particular," should have suddenly descended so low as to keep company with Arabella. The latter guessed what was being said, and laughed as she

met the serious and tender gaze of her lover — the low and triumphant laugh of a careless woman who sees she is winning her game.

They sat and looked round the room, and at the picture of Samson and Delilah which hung on the wall, and at the circular beer-stains on the table, and at the spittoons underfoot filled with sawdust. The whole aspect of the scene had that depressing effect on Jude which few places can produce like a tap-room on a Sunday evening when the setting sun is slanting in, and no liquor is going, and the unfortunate wayfarer finds himself with no other haven of rest.

It began to grow dusk. They could not wait longer, really, they said. "Yet what else can we do?" asked Jude. "It is a three-mile walk for you."

"I suppose we can have some beer," said Arabella.

"Beer! Oh yes. I had forgotten that. Somehow it seems odd to come to a public-house for beer on a Sunday evening."

"But we didn't."

"No, we didn't." Jude by this time wished he was out of such an uncongenial atmosphere; but he ordered the beer, which was promptly brought.

Arabella tasted it. "Ugh!" she said.

Jude tasted. "What's the matter with it?" he asked. "I don't understand beer very much now, it is true. I like it well enough, but it is bad to read on, and I find coffee better. But this seems all right."

"Adulterated—I can't touch it!" She mentioned three or four ingredients that she detected in the liquor beyond malt and hops, much to Jude's surprise.

"How much you know!" he said, good-humoredly.

Nevertheless she returned to the beer and drank her share, and they went on their way. It was now nearly dark, and as soon as they had withdrawn from the lights of the town they walked closer together, till they touched each other. She wondered why he did not put his arm

round her waist, but he did not; he merely said what to himself seemed a quite bold enough thing: "Take my arm."

She took it, thoroughly, up to the shoulder. He felt the warmth of her body against his, and, putting his stick under his other arm, held with his right hand her right as it rested in its place.

"Now we are well together, dear, aren't we," he observed.

"Yes," said she; adding to herself: "Rather mild!"

"How fast I have become!" he was thinking.

Thus they walked till they reached the foot of the upland, where they could see the white highway ascending before them in the gloom. From this point the only way of getting to Arabella's was by going up the incline, and dipping again into the valley on the right. Before they had climbed far they were nearly run into by two men who had been walking on the grass unseen.

"These lovers—you find 'em out-o'-doors in all seasons and weathers—lovers and homeless dogs only," said one of the men as they vanished down the hill.

Arabella tittered lightly.

"Are we lovers?" asked Jude.

"You know best."

"But you can tell me?"

For answer she inclined her head upon his shoulder. Jude took the hint, and encircling her waist with his arm, pulled her to him and kissed her.

They walked now no longer arm in arm, but, as she had desired, clasped together. After all, what did it matter since it was dark, said Jude to himself. When they were half-way up the long hill they paused as by arrangement, and he kissed her again. They reached the top, and he kissed her once more.

"You can keep your arm there, if you would like to," she said, gently.

He did so, thinking how trusting she was.

Thus they slowly went towards her home. He had left his cottage at half-past three, intending to be sitting down

again to the New Testament by half-past five. It was nine o'clock when, with another embrace, he stood to deliver her up at her father's door.

She asked him to come in, if only for a minute, as it would seem so odd otherwise, and as if she had been out alone in the dark. He gave way, and followed her in. Immediately that the door was opened he found, in addition to her parents, several neighbors sitting round. They all spoke in a congratulatory manner, and took him seriously as Arabella's intended partner.

They did not belong to his set or circle, and he felt out of place and embarrassed. He had not meant this: a mere afternoon of pleasant walking with Arabella, that was all he had meant. He did not stay longer than to speak to her step-mother, a simple, quiet woman, without features or character; and bidding them all good-night, plunged with a sense of relief into the track over the down.

But that sense was only temporary. Arabella soon reasserted her sway in his soul. He walked as if he felt himself to be another man from the Jude of yesterday. What were his books to him? what were his intentions, hitherto adhered to so strictly, as to not wasting a single minute of time day by day? "Wasting!" It depended on your point of view to define that: he was just living for the first time; not wasting life. It was better to love a woman than to be a graduate, or a parson—ay, or a pope!

When he got back to the house, his aunt had gone to bed, and a general consciousness of his neglect seemed written on the face of all things confronting him. He went up-stairs without a light, and the dim interior of his room accosted him with sad inquiry. There lay his book open, just as he had left it, and the capital letters on the title-page regarded him with fixed reproach in the gray starlight, like the unclosed eyes of a dead man:

Η ΚΑΙΝΗ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ.

. . . . . .

Jude had to leave early next morning for his usual week of absence at lodgings; and it was with a sense of futility that he threw into his basket upon his tools and other necessaries the unread book he had brought with him.

He kept his impassioned doings a secret almost from himself. Arabella, on the contrary, made them public among all her friends and acquaintances.

Retracing by the light of dawn the road he had followed a few hours earlier, under cover of darkness, with his sweetheart by his side, he reached the bottom of the hill, where he walked slowly, and stood still. He was on the spot where he had given her the first kiss. As the sun had only just risen, it was possible that nobody had passed there since. Jude looked on the ground and sighed. He looked closely, and could just discern in the damp dust the imprints of their feet as they had stood locked in each other's arms. She was not there now, and "the embroidery of imagination upon the stuff of nature" so depicted her past presence that a void was in his heart which nothing could fill. A pollard willow stood close to the place, and that willow was different from all other willows in the world. Utter annihilation of the six days which must elapse before he could see her again as he had promised would have been his intensest wish if he had had only the week to live.

An hour and a half later Arabella came along the same way with her two companions of the Saturday. She passed unheedingly the scene of the kiss and the willow that marked it, though chattering freely on the subject to the other two.

"And what did he tell 'ee next?"

"Then he said—" And she related almost word for word some of his tenderest speeches. If Jude had been behind the fence he would have felt not a little surprised at learning how very few of his sayings and doings on the previous evening were private.

"You've got him to care for 'ee a bit, 'nation if you

ha'n't!" murmured Anny, judicially. "It's well to be you!"

In a few moments Arabella replied, in a curiously low, fierce tone of latent sensuousness: "I've got him to care for me—yes! But I want him to more than care for me; I want him to have me—to marry me! I must have him. I can't do without him. He's the sort of man I long for. I shall go mad if I can't give myself to him altogether! I felt I should when I first saw him!"

"As he is a romancing, straightfor'ard, honest chap, he's to be had, and as a husband, if you set about catching him in the right way."

Arabella remained thinking a while. "What med be the right way?" she asked.

"Oh, you don't know—you don't!" said Sarah, the third girl.

"On my word, I don't!—No further, that is, than by plain courting, and taking care he don't go too far!"

The third girl looked at the second. "She *don't* know!"

"'Tis clear she don't!" said Anny.

"And having lived in a town, too, as one may say! Well, we can teach 'ee som'at, then, as well as you us."

"Yes. And how do you mean—a sure way to gain a man? Take me for a' innocent, and have done wi' it!"

"As a husband."

"As a husband."

"A countryman that's honorable and serious-minded such as he. God forbid that I should say a sojer, or sailor, or commercial gent from the towns, or any of them that be slippery with poor women! I'd do no friend that harm!"

"Well, such as he, of course!"

Arabella's companions looked at each other, and, turning up their eyes in drollery, began smirking. Then one went up close to Arabella, and, although nobody was near, imparted some information in a low tone, the other observing curiously the effect upon Arabella.

"Ah!" said the last-named, slowly. "I own I didn't think of that way! . . . But suppose he *isn't* honorable? A woman had better not have tried it!"

"Nothing venture nothing have! Besides, you make sure that he's honorable before you begin. You'd be safe enough with yours. I wish I had the chance! Lots of girls do it; or do you think they'd get married at all?"

Arabella pursued her way in silent thought. "I'll try it!" she whispered, but not to them.

VIII

At the week's end Jude was again walking out to his aunt's at Marygreen from his lodging in Alfredston, a walk which now had large attractions for him quite other than his desire to see his aged and morose relative. He diverged to the right before ascending the hill, with the single purpose of gaining, on his way, a glimpse of Arabella that should not come into the reckoning of regular appointments. Before quite reaching the homestead his alert eye perceived the top of her head moving quickly hither and thither over the garden hedge. Entering the gate, he found that three young unfattened pigs had escaped from their sty by leaping clean over the top, and that she was endeavoring unassisted to drive them in through the door which she had set open. The lines of her countenance changed from the rigidity of business to the softness of love when she saw Jude, and she bent her eyes languishingly upon him. The animals took advantage of the pause by doubling and bolting out of the way.

"They were only put in this morning!" she cried, stimulated to pursue in spite of her lover's presence. "They were drove from Spaddleholt Farm only yesterday, where father bought 'em at a stiff price enough. They are wanting to get home again, the stupid toads! Will you shut the garden gate, dear, and help me to get 'em in? There be no men-folk at home, only mother, and they'll be lost if we don't mind."

He set himself to assist, and dodged this way and that over the potato rows and the cabbages. Every now and

then they ran together, when he caught her for a moment and kissed her. The first pig was got back promptly; the second with some difficulty; the third, a long-legged creature, was more obstinate and agile. He plunged through a hole in the garden hedge, and into the lane.

"He'll be lost if I don't follow 'n!" said she. "Come along with me!"

She rushed in full pursuit out of the garden, Jude alongside her, barely contriving to keep the fugitive in sight. Occasionally they would shout to some boy to stop the animal, but he always wriggled past and ran on as before.

"Let me take your hand, darling," said Jude. "You are getting out of breath." She gave him her now hot hand with apparent willingness, and they trotted along together.

"This comes of driving, 'em home," she remarked. "They always know the way back if you do that. They ought to have been carted over."

By this time the pig had reached an unfastened gate admitting to the open down, across which he sped with all the agility his little legs afforded. As soon as the pursuers had entered and ascended to the top of the high ground, it became apparent that they would have to run all the way to the farmer's if they wished to get at him. From this summit he could be seen as a minute speck, following an unerring line towards the farm.

"It is no good!" cried Arabella. "He'll be there long before we get there. It don't matter now we know he's not lost or stolen on the way. They'll see it is ours, and send un back. Oh, dear, how hot I be!"

Without relinquishing her hold of Jude's hand she swerved aside and flung herself down on the sod under a stunted thorn, precipitately pulling Jude on to his knees at the same time.

"Oh, I ask pardon — I nearly threw you down, didn't I? But I am so tired!"

She lay supine, and straight as an arrow, on the sloping

sod of this hill-top, gazing up into the blue miles of sky, and still retaining her warm hold of Jude's hand. He reclined on his elbow near her.

"We've run all this way for nothing," she went on, her form heaving and falling in quick pants, her face flushed, her full red lips parted, and a fine dew of perspiration on her skin. "Well—why don't you speak, deary?"

"I'm blown, too. It was all up-hill."

They were in absolute solitude—the most apparent of all solitudes, that of empty surrounding space. Nobody could be nearer than a mile to them without their seeing him. They were, in fact, on one of the summits of the county, and the distant landscape around Christminster could be discerned from where they lay. But Jude did not think of that then.

"Oh, I can see such a pretty thing up this tree," said Arabella. "A sort of a—caterpillar, of the most loveliest green and yellow you ever came across!"

"Where?" said Jude, sitting up.

"You can't see him there—you must come here," said she.

He bent nearer and put his head by hers. "No—I can't see it," he said.

"Why, on the limb there where it branches off—close to the moving leaf—there!" She gently pressed his face towards the position.

"I don't see it," he repeated, the back of his head against her cheek. "But I can, perhaps, standing up." He stood accordingly, placing himself in the direct line of her gaze.

"How stupid you are!" she said, crossly, turning away her face.

"I don't care to see it, dear; why should I?" he replied, looking down upon her. "Get up, Abby."

"Why?"

"I want you to let me kiss you. I've been waiting to ever so long!"

She roiled round her face, remained a moment looking deedily aslant at him; then, with a slight curl of the lip, sprang to her feet, and exclaiming, abruptly, "I must mizzle!" walked off quickly homeward. Jude followed and rejoined her.

"Just one!" he coaxed.

"Sha'n't!" she said.

He, surprised: "What's the matter?"

She kept her two lips resentfully together, and Jude followed her like a pet lamb till she slackened her pace and walked beside him, talking calmly on indifferent subjects, and always checking him if he tried to take her hand or clasp her waist. Thus they descended to the precincts of her father's homestead, and Arabella went in, nodding good-bye to him with a supercilious, affronted air.

"I expect I took too much liberty with her, somehow," Jude said to himself, as he withdrew with a sigh and went on to Marygreen.

On Sunday morning the interior of Arabella's home was, as usual, the scene of a grand weekly cooking, the preparation of the special Sunday dinner. Her father was shaving before a little glass hung on the mullion of the window, and her mother and Arabella herself were shelling beans hard by. A neighbor passed on her way home from morning service at the nearest church, and, seeing Donn engaged at the window with the razor, nodded and came in.

She at once spoke playfully to Arabella: "I zeed 'ee running with un—hee-hee! I hope 'tis coming to something?"

Arabella merely threw a look of consciousness into her face without raising her eyes.

"He's for Christminster, I hear, as soon as he can get there."

"Have you heard that lately—quite lately?" asked Arabella, with a jealous, tigerish indrawing of breath.

"Oh no! But it has been known a long time that it is his plan. He's on'y waiting here for an opening. Ah, well; he must walk about with somebody, I s'pose. Young men don't mean much nowadays. 'Tis a sip here and a sip there with 'em. 'Twas different in my time."

When the gossip had departed Arabella said, suddenly, to her mother: "I want you and father to go and inquire how the Edlins be, this evening after tea. Or no—there's evening service at Fensworth—you can walk to that."

"Oh! What's up to-night, then?"

"Nothing. Only I want the house to myself. He's shy; and I can't get un to come in when you are here. I shall let him slip through my fingers if I don't mind, much as I care for 'n!"

"If it is fine we med as well go, since you wish."

In the afternoon Arabella met and walked with Jude, who had now for weeks ceased to look into a book of Greek, Latin, or any other tongue. They wandered up the slopes till they reached the green track along the ridge, which they followed to the circular British earth-bank adjoining, Jude thinking of the great age of the trackway, and of the drovers who had frequented it, probably before the Romans knew the country. Up from the level lands below them floated the chime of church bells. Presently they were reduced to one note, which quickened and stopped.

"Now we'll go back," said Arabella, who had attended to the sounds.

Jude assented. So long as he was near her he minded little where he was. When they arrived at her house he said, lingeringly: "I won't come in. Why are you in such a hurry to go in to-night? It is not near dark."

"Wait a moment," said she. She tried the handle of the door and found it locked. "Ah—they are gone to church," she added. And, searching behind the scraper, she found the key and unlocked the door. "Now, you'll

come in a moment?" she asked, lightly. "We shall be all alone."

"Certainly," said Jude, with alacrity, the case being unexpectedly altered.

In-doors they went. Did he want any tea? No, it was too late; he would rather sit and talk to her. She took off her jacket and hat, and they sat down — naturally enough close together.

"Don't touch me, please," she said, softly. "I am part egg-shell. Or perhaps I had better put it in a safe place." She began unfastening the collar of her gown.

"What is it?" said her lover.

"An egg—a bantam's egg. I am hatching a very rare sort. I carry it about everywhere with me, and it will get hatched in less than three weeks."

"Where do you carry it?"

"Just here." She put her hand into her bosom and drew out the egg, which was wrapped in wool, outside it being a piece of pig's bladder, in case of accidents. Having exhibited it to him, she put it back. "Now, mind, you don't come near me. I don't want to get it broke, and have to begin another."

"Why do you do such a strange thing?"

"Just for a fancy. I suppose it is natural for a woman to want to bring live things into the world."

"It is very awkward for me just now," he said, laughing.

"It serves you right. There—that's all you can have of me." She had turned round her chair, and reaching over the back of it presented her cheek to him gingerly.

"That's very shabby of you!"

"You should have catched me a minute ago when I had put the egg down! There!" she said, defiantly, "I am without it now!" She had quickly withdrawn the egg a second time; but before he could quite reach her she had put it back as quickly, laughing with the excitement of her strategy. Then there was a little struggle,

Jude making a plunge for it and capturing it triumphantly. Her face flushed; and becoming suddenly conscious, he flushed also.

They looked at each other, panting; till he rose and said: "One kiss; now I can do it without damage to property, and I'll go!"

But she had jumped up too. "You must find me first!" she cried.

Her lover followed her as she withdrew. It was now dark inside the room, and the window being small, he could not discover for a long time what had become of her, till a laugh revealed her to have rushed up the stairs, whither Jude rushed at her heels.

IX

It was some two months later in the year, and the pair had met constantly during the interval. Arabella seemed dissatisfied; she was always imagining and waiting and wondering.

One day she met the itinerant Vilbert. She, like all the cottagers thereabout, knew the quack well, and they began talking about her experiences. Arabella had been gloomy, but before he left her she had grown brighter. That evening she kept an appointment with Jude, who seemed sad.

"I am going away," he said to her. "I think I ought to go. I think it will be better both for you and for me. I wish some things had never begun! I was much to blame, I know. But it is never too late to mend."

Arabella began to cry. "How do you know it is not too late?" she said. "That's all very well to say! I haven't told you yet!" and she looked into his face with streaming eyes.

"What?" he asked, turning pale. "Not . . . ?"

"Yes! And what shall I do if you desert me?"

"Oh, Arabella—how can you say that, my dear! You *know* I wouldn't desert you!"

"Well, then—"

"I have next to no wages as yet, you know; or perhaps I should have thought of this before. . . . But, of course, if that's the case, we must marry! What other thing do you think I could dream of doing?"

"I thought—I thought, deary, perhaps you would go away all the more for that, and leave me to face it alone!'

"You knew better! Of course I never dreamed six months ago, or even three, of marrying. It is a complete smashing up of my plans — I mean my plans before I knew you, my dear. But what are they, after all! Dreams about books, and degrees, and impossible scholarships, and all that. Certainly we'll marry; we must!"

That night he went out alone, and walked in the dark, self-communing. He knew well, too well, in the secret centre of his brain, that Arabella was not worth a great deal as a specimen of womankind. Yet, such being the custom of the rural districts, among honorable young men who had drifted so far into intimacy with a woman as he unfortunately had done, he was ready to abide by what he had said, and take the consequences. For his own soothing he kept up a factitious belief in her. His idea of her was the thing of most consequence, not Arabella herself, he sometimes said laconically.

The banns were put in and published the very next Sunday. The people of the parish all said what a simple fool young Fawley was. All his reading had only come to this, that he would have to sell his books to buy saucepans. Those who guessed the probable state of affairs, Arabella's parents being among them, declared that it was the sort of conduct they would have expected of such an honest young man as Jude in reparation of the wrong he had done his innocent sweetheart. The parson who married them seemed to think it satisfactory too.

And so, standing before the aforesaid officiator, the two swore that at every other time of their lives they would assuredly believe, feel, and desire precisely as they had believed, felt, and desired during the few preceding weeks. What was as remarkable as the undertaking itself was the fact that nobody seemed at all surprised at what they swore.

Fawley's aunt being a baker, she made him a bride-cake, saying bitterly that it was the last thing she could do for him, poor silly fellow; and that it would have

been far better if, instead of his living to trouble her, he had gone underground years before with his father and mother. Of this cake Arabella took some slices, wrapped them up in white note-paper, and sent them to her companions in the pork-dressing business, Anny and Sarah, labelling each packet, "*In remembrance of good advice.*"

The prospects of the newly-married couple were certainly not very brilliant even to the most sanguine mind, He, a stone-cutter's apprentice, nineteen years of age, was working for half wages till he should be out of his time. His wife was absolutely useless in a town-lodging, where he at first had considered it would be necessary for them to live. But the urgent need of adding to income in ever so little a degree caused him to take a lonely road-side cottage between the Brown House and Marygreen, that he might have the profits of a vegetable garden, and utilize her past experiences by letting her keep a pig. But it was not the sort of life he had bargained for, and it was a long way to walk to and from Alfredston every day. Arabella, however, felt that all these makeshifts were temporary; she had gained a husband; that was the thing—a husband with a lot of earning power in him for buying her frocks and hats when he should begin to get frightened a bit, and stick to his trade, and throw aside those stupid books for practical undertakings.

So to the cottage he took her on the evening of the marriage, giving up his old room at his aunt's—where so much of the hard labor at Greek and Latin had been carried on.

A little chill overspread him at her first unrobing. A long tail of hair, which Arabella wore twisted up in an enormous knob at the back of her head, was deliberately unfastened, stroked out, and hung upon the looking-glass which he had bought her.

"What—it wasn't your own?" he said, with a sudden distaste for her.

"Oh no—it never is nowadays with the better class."

"Nonsense! Perhaps not in towns. But in the country it is supposed to be different. Besides, you've enough of your own, surely? Why, it's a lot!"

"Yes, enough as country notions go. But in towns the men expect more, and when I was barmaid at Aldbrickham—"

"Barmaid at Aldbrickham?"

"Well, not exactly barmaid—I used to draw the drink at a public-house there—just for a little time; that was all. Some people put me up to getting this, and I bought it just for a fancy. The more you have the better in Aldbrickham, which is a finer town than all your Christminsters. Every lady of position wears false hair—the barber's assistant told me so."

Jude thought with a feeling of sickness that though this might be true to some extent, for all that he knew, many unsophisticated girls would and did go to towns and remain there for years without losing their simplicity of life and embellishments. Others, alas, had an instinct towards artificiality in their very blood, and became adepts in counterfeiting at the first glimpse of it. However, perhaps there was no great sin in a woman adding to her hair, and he resolved to think no more of it.

A new-made wife can usually manage to look interesting for a few weeks, even though the prospects of the household ways and means are cloudy. There is a certain piquancy about her situation, and her manner to her acquaintance at the sense of it, which carries off the gloom of facts, and renders even the humblest bride independent a while of the real. Mrs. Jude Fawley was walking in the streets of Alfredston one market-day with this quality in her carriage, when she met Anny, her former friend, whom she had not seen since the wedding.

As usual, they laughed before talking; the world seemed funny to them without saying it.

"So it turned out a good plan, you see!" remarked the girl to the wife. "I knew it would with such as him. He's a dear good fellow, and you ought to be proud of un."

"I am," said Mrs. Fawley, quietly.

"And when do you expect—?"

"'S-sh! Not at all."

"What!"

"I was mistaken."

"Oh, Arabella, Arabella; you be a deep one! Mistaken! well, that's clever—it's a rale stroke of genius! It is a thing I never thought o', wi' all my experience! I never thought beyond the rale thing—not that one could sham it!"

"Don't you be too quick to cry sham! 'Twasn't sham. I didn't know."

"My word—won't he be in a taking! He'll give it to 'ee o' Saturday nights! Whatever it was, he'll say it was a trick—a double one, by the Lord!"

"I'll own to the first, but not to the second. . . . Pooh—he won't care! He'll be glad I was wrong in what I said. He'll shake down, bless 'ee—men always do. What can 'em do otherwise? Married is married."

Nevertheless it was with a little uneasiness that Arabella approached the time when, in the natural course of things, she would have to reveal that the alarm she had raised had been without foundation. The occasion was one evening at bed-time, and they were in their chamber in the lonely cottage by the way-side, to which Jude walked home from his work every day. He had worked hard the whole twelve hours, and had retired to rest before his wife. When she came into the room he was between sleeping and waking, and was barely conscious of her undressing before the little looking-glass as he lay.

One action of hers, however, brought him to full cognition. Her face being reflected towards him as she sat,

he could perceive that she was amusing herself by artificially producing in each cheek the dimple before alluded to, a curious accomplishment of which she was mistress, effecting it by a momentary suction. It seemed to him for the first time that the dimples were far oftener absent from her face during his intercourse with her nowadays than they had been in the earlier weeks of their acquaintance.

"Don't do that, Arabella!" he said, suddenly. "There is no harm in it, but—I don't like to see you."

She turned and laughed. "Lord, I didn't know you was awake!" she said. "How countrified you are! That's nothing."

"Where did you learn it?"

"Nowhere that I know of. They used to stay without any trouble when I was at the public-house; but now they won't. My face was fatter then."

"I don't care about dimples. I don't think they improve a woman — particularly a married woman, and of full-sized figure like you."

"Most men think otherwise."

"I don't care what most men think, if they do. How do you know?"

"I used to be told so when I was serving in the tap-room."

"Ah—that public-house experience accounts for your knowing about the adulteration of the ale when we went and had some that Sunday evening. I thought when I married you that you had always lived in your father's house."

"You ought to have known better than that, and seen I was a little more finished than I could have been by staying where I was born. There was not much to do at home, and I was eating my head off, so I went away for three months."

"You'll soon have plenty to do now, dear, won't you?"

"How do you mean?"

"Why, of course—little things to make."

"Oh!"

"When will it be? Can't you tell me exactly, instead of in such general terms as you have used?"

"Tell you?"

"Yes—the date."

"There's nothing to tell. I made a mistake."

"What?"

"It was a mistake."

He sat bolt upright in bed and looked at her. "How can that be?"

"People fancy wrong things sometimes."

"But —! Why, of course, so unprepared as I was, without a stick of furniture, and hardly a shilling, I shouldn't have hurried on our affair, and brought you to a half-furnished hut before I was ready, if it had not been for the news you gave me, which made it necessary to save you, ready or no. . . . Good God!"

"Don't take on, dear. What's done can't be undone."

"I have no more to say!"

He gave the answer simply, and lay down; and there was silence between them.

When Jude awoke the next morning he seemed to see the world with a different eye. As to the point in question, he was compelled to accept her word; in the circumstances he could not have acted otherwise while ordinary notions prevailed. But how came they to prevail?

There seemed to him, vaguely and dimly, something wrong in a social ritual which made necessary a cancelling of well-formed schemes involving years of thought and labor, of foregoing a man's one opportunity of showing himself superior to the lower animals, and of contributing his units of work to the general progress of his generation, because of a momentary surprise by a new and transitory instinct which had nothing in it of the nature of vice, and could be only at the most called weakness. He was inclined to inquire what he had done, or

she lost, for that matter, that he deserved to be caught in a gin which would cripple him, if not her also, for the rest of a lifetime? There was perhaps something fortunate in the fact that the immediate reason of his marriage had proved to be non-existent. But the marriage remained.

X

THE time arrived for killing the pig which Jude and his wife had fattened in their sty during the autumn months, and the butchering was timed to take place as soon as it was light in the morning, so that Jude might get to Alfredston without losing more than a quarter of a day.

The night had seemed strangely silent. Jude looked out of the window long before dawn, and perceived that the ground was covered with snow—snow rather deep for the season, it seemed, a few flakes still falling.

"I'm afraid the pig-killer won't be able to come," he said to Arabella.

"Oh, he'll come. You must get up and make the water hot, if you want Challow to scald him. Though I like singeing best."

"I'll get up," said Jude. "I like the way of my own county."

He went down-stairs, lit the fire under the copper, and began feeding it with bean-stalks, all the time without a candle, the blaze flinging a cheerful shine into the room; though for him the sense of cheerfulness was lessened by thoughts on the reason of that blaze — to heat water to scald an animal that as yet lived, and whose voice could be continually heard from a corner of the garden. At half-past six, the time of appointment with the butcher, the water boiled, and Jude's wife came down-stairs.

"Is Challow come?" she asked.

"No."

They waited, and it grew lighter, with the dreary light

of a snowy dawn. She went out, gazed along the road, and returning, said, "He's not coming. Drunk last night, I expect. The snow is not enough to hinder him, surely!"

"Then we must put it off. It is only the water boiled for nothing. The snow may be deep in the valley."

"Can't be put off. There's no more victuals for the pig. He ate the last mixing o' barleymeal yesterday morning."

"Yesterday morning? What has he lived on since?"

"Nothing."

"What—he has been starving?"

"Yes. We always do it the last day or two, to save bother with the innerds. What ignorance, not to know that!"

"That accounts for his crying so. Poor creature!"

"Well—you must do the sticking—there's no help for it. I'll show you how. Or I'll do it myself—I think I could. Though as it is such a big pig I had rather Challow had done it. However, his basket o' knives and things have been already sent on here, and we can use 'em."

"Of course you sha'n't do it," said Jude. "I'll do it, since it must be done."

He went out to the sty, shovelled away the snow for the space of a couple of yards or more, and placed the stool in front, with the knives and ropes at hand. A robin peered down at the preparations from the nearest tree, and, not liking the sinister look of the scene, flew away, though hungry. By this time Arabella had joined her husband, and Jude, rope in hand, got into the sty, and noosed the affrighted animal, who, beginning with a squeak of surprise, rose to repeated cries of rage. Arabella opened the sty-door, and together they hoisted the victim on to the stool, legs upward, and while Jude held him, Arabella bound him down, looping the cord over his legs to keep him from struggling.

The animal's note changed its quality. It was not now

rage, but the cry of despair; long-drawn, slow, and hopeless.

"Upon my soul, I would sooner have gone without the pig than have had this to do!" said Jude. "A creature I have fed with my own hands."

"Don't be such a tender-hearted fool! There's the sticking-knife—the one with the point. Now whatever you do, don't stick un too deep."

"I'll stick un effectually, so as to make short work of it. That's the chief thing."

"You must not!" she cried. "The meat must be well bled, and to do that he must die slow. We shall lose a shilling a score if the meat is red and bloody! Just touch the vein, that's all. I was brought up to it, and I know. Every good butcher keeps un bleeding long. He ought to be eight or ten minutes dying, at least."

"He shall not be half a minute if I can help it, however the meat may look," said Jude, determinedly. Scraping the bristles from the pig's upturned throat, as he had seen the butchers do, he slit the fat; then plunged in the knife with all his might.

"'Od damn it all!" she cried, "that ever I should say it! You've over-stuck un! And I telling you all the time—"

"Do be quiet, Arabella, and have a little pity on the creature!"

However unworkmanlike the deed, it had been mercifully done. The blood flowed out in a torrent instead of in the trickling stream she had desired. The dying animal's cry assumed its third and final tone, the shriek of agony; his glazing eyes rivetting themselves on Arabella with the eloquently keen reproach of a creature recognizing at last the treachery of those who had seemed his only friends.

"Make un stop that!" said Arabella. "Such a noise will bring somebody or other up here, and I don't want people to know we are doing it ourselves." Picking up

the knife from the ground whereon Jude had flung it, she slipped it into the gash, and slit the wind-pipe. The pig was instantly silent, his dying breath coming through the hole.

"That's better," she said.

"It is a hateful business!" said he.

"Pigs must be killed."

The animal heaved in a final convulsion, and, despite the rope, kicked out with all his last strength. A tablespoonful of black clot came forth, the trickling of red blood having ceased for some seconds.

"That's it; now he'll go," said she. "Artful creatures—they always keep back a drop like that as long as they can!"

The last plunge had come so unexpectedly as to make Jude stagger, and in recovering himself he kicked over the vessel in which the blood had been caught.

"There!" she cried, thoroughly in a passion. "Now I can't make any blackpot. There's a waste, all through you!"

"Jude put the pan upright, but only about a third of the whole steaming liquid was left in it, the main part being splashed over the snow, and forming a dismal, sordid, ugly spectacle—to those who saw it as other than an ordinary obtaining of meat. The lips and nostrils of the animal turned livid, then white, and the muscles of his limbs relaxed.

"Thank God!" Jude said. "He's dead."

"What's God got to do with such a messy job as a pig-killing, I should like to know!" she said, scornfully. "Poor folks must live."

"I know, I know," said he. "I don't scold you."

Suddenly they became aware of a voice at hand.

"Well done, young married volk! I couldn't have carried it out much better myself, cuss me if I could!" The voice, which was husky, came from the garden-gate, and looking up from the scene of slaughter they saw the burly

form of Mr. Challow leaning over the gate, critically surveying their performance.

"'Tis well for 'ee to stand there and glane!" said Arabella. "Owing to your being late the meat is blooded and half spoiled! 'Twon't fetch so much by a shilling a score!"

Challow expressed his contrition. "You should have waited a bit," he said, shaking his head, "and not have done this—in the delicate state, too, that you be in at present, ma'am. 'Tis risking yourself too much."

"You needn't be concerned about that," said Arabella, laughing. Jude too laughed, but there was a strong flavor of bitterness in his amusement.

Challow made up for his neglect of the killing by zeal in the scalding and scraping. Jude felt dissatisfied with himself as a man at what he had done, though aware of his lack of common sense, and that the deed would have amounted to the same thing if carried out by deputy. The white snow, stained with the blood of his fellow-mortal, wore an illogical look to him as a lover of justice, not to say a Christian; but he could not see how the matter was to be mended. No doubt he was, as his wife had called him, a tender-hearted fool.

He did not like the road to Alfredston now. It stared him cynically in the face. The way-side objects reminded him so much of his courtship of his wife that, to keep them out of his eyes, he read whenever he could as he walked to and from his work. Yet he sometimes felt that by caring for books he was not escaping commonplace nor gaining rare ideas, every working-man being of that taste now. When passing near the spot by the stream on which he had first made her acquaintance he one day heard voices just as he had done at that earlier time. One of the girls who had been Arabella's companions was talking to a friend in a shed, himself being the subject of discourse, possibly because they had seen him in the distance. They were quite unaware that the

shed-walls were so thin that he could hear their words as he passed.

"Howsomever, 'twas I put her up to it! 'Nothing venture nothing have,' I said. If I hadn't she'd no more have been his mis'ess than I."

"'Tis my belief she knew before. . . ."

What had Arabella been put up to by this woman, so that he should make her his "mis'ess," otherwise wife? The suggestion was horridly unpleasant, and it rankled in his mind so much that instead of entering his own cottage when he reached it he flung his basket inside the garden-gate and passed on, determined to go and see his old aunt and get some supper there.

This made his arrival home rather late. Arabella, however, was busy melting down lard from fat of the deceased pig, for she had been out on a jaunt all day, and so delayed her work. Dreading lest what he had heard should lead him to say something regrettable to her, he spoke little. But Arabella was very talkative, and said, among other things, that she wanted some money. Seeing the book sticking out of his pocket, she added that he ought to earn more.

"An apprentice's wages are not meant to be enough to keep a wife on, as a rule, my dear."

"Then you shouldn't have had one."

"Come, Arabella! That's too bad, when you know how it came about."

"I'll declare afore Heaven that I thought what I told you was true. Doctor Vilbert thought so. It was a good job for you that it wasn't so!"

"I don't mean that," he said, hastily. "I mean before that time. I know it was not your fault; but those women friends of yours gave you bad advice. If they hadn't, or you hadn't taken it, we should at this moment have been free from a bond which, not to mince matters, galls both of us devilishly. It may be very sad, but it is true."

"Who's been telling you about my friends? What advice? I insist upon your telling me."

"Pooh—I'd rather not."

"But you shall—you ought to. It is mean of 'ee not to!"

"Very well." And he hinted gently what had been revealed to him. "But I don't wish to dwell upon it. Let us say no more about it."

Her defensive manner collapsed. "That was nothing," she said, laughing coldly. "Every woman has a right to do such as that. The risk is hers."

"I quite deny it, Bella. She might, if no life-long penalty attached to it for the man, or, in his default, for herself; if the weakness of the moment could end with the moment, or even with the year. But when effects stretch so far she should not go and do that which entraps a man if he is honest, or herself if he is otherwise."

"What ought I to have done?"

"Given me time. . . . Why do you fuss yourself about melting down that pig's fat to-night? Please put it away!"

"Then I must do it to-morrow morning. It won't keep."

"Very well—do."

XI

NEXT morning, which was Sunday, she resumed operations about ten o'clock; and the renewed work recalled the conversation which had accompanied it the night before, and put her back into the same intractable temper.

"That's the story about me in Marygreen, is it—that I entrapped 'ee? Much of a catch you was, Lord send!" As she warmed she saw some of Jude's dear ancient classics on a table where they ought not to have been laid. "I won't have them books here in the way!" she cried, petulantly; and seizing them one by one she began throwing them on the floor.

"Leave my books alone!" he said. "You might have thrown them aside if you had liked, but as to soiling them like that, it is disgusting!" In the operation of making lard Arabella's hands had become smeared with the hot grease, and her fingers consequently left very perceptible imprints on the book-covers. She continued deliberately to toss the books severally upon the floor, till Jude, incensed beyond bearing, caught her by the arms to make her leave off. Somehow, in doing so, he loosened the fastening of her hair, and it rolled about her ears.

"Let me go!" she said.

"Promise to leave the books alone."

She hesitated. "Let me go!" she repeated.

"Promise!"

After a pause: "I do."

Jude relinquished his hold, and she crossed the room to the door, out of which she went with a set face, and into the highway. Here she began to saunter up and

down, perversely pulling her hair into a worse disorder than he had caused, and unfastening several buttons of her gown. It was a fine Sunday morning, dry, clear, and frosty, and the bells of Alfredston Church could be heard on the breeze from the north. People were going along the road, dressed in their holiday clothes; they were mainly lovers—such pairs as Jude and Arabella had been when they sported along the same track some months earlier. These pedestrians turned to stare at the extraordinary spectacle she now presented, bonnetless, her dishevelled hair blowing in the wind, her bodice apart, her sleeves rolled above her elbows for her work, and her hands reeking with melted fat. One of the passers said, in mock terror: "Good Lord deliver us!"

"See how he's served me!" she cried. "Making me work Sunday mornings when I ought to be going to my church, and tearing my hair off my head, and my gown off my back!"

Jude was exasperated, and went out to drag her in by main force. Then he suddenly lost his heat. Illuminated with the sense that all was over between them, and that it mattered not what she did, or he, her husband stood still, regarding her. Their lives were ruined, he thought; ruined by the fundamental error of their matrimonial union; that of having based a permanent contract on a temporary feeling which had no necessary connection with affinities that alone render a life-long comradeship tolerable.

"Going to ill-use me on principle, as your father ill-used your mother, and your father's sister ill-used her husband?" she asked. "All you be a queer lot as husbands and wives!"

Jude fixed an arrested, surprised look on her. But she said no more, and continued her saunter till she was tired. He left the spot, and, after wandering vaguely a little while, walked in the direction of Marygreen. Here he called upon his great-aunt, whose infirmities daily increased.

"Aunt—did my father ill-use my mother, and my aunt her husband?" said Jude, abruptly, sitting down by the fire.

She raised her ancient eyes under the rim of the bygone bonnet that she always wore. "Who's been telling you that?" she said.

"I have heard it spoken of, and want to know all."

"You med so well, I s'pose; though your wife—I reckon 'twas she—must have been a fool to open up that! There isn't much to know, after all. Your father and mother couldn't get on together, and they parted. It was coming home from Alfredston market, when you were a baby—on the hill by the Brown House barn—that they had their last difference, and took leave of one another for the last time. Your mother soon afterwards died—she drowned herself, in short, and your father went away with you to South Wessex, and never came here any more."

Jude recalled his father's silence about North Wessex and Jude's mother, never speaking of either till his dying day.

"It was the same with your father's sister. Her husband offended her, and she so disliked living with him afterwards that she went away to London with her little maid. The Fawleys were not made for wedlock; it never seemed to sit well upon us. There's sommat in our blood that won't take kindly to the notion of being bound to do what we do readily enough if not bound. That's why you ought to have hearkened to me, and not ha' married."

"Where did father and mother part — by the Brown House, did you say?"

"A little farther on—where the road to Fenworth branches off, and the hand-post stands. A gibbet once stood there."

In the dusk of that evening Jude walked away from his old aunt's as if to go home. But as soon as he reached the open down he struck out upon it till he came to a

"'SEE HOW HE'S SERVED ME!' SHE CRIED"

large round pond. The frost continued, though it was not particularly sharp, and the larger stars overhead came out slow and flickering. Jude put one foot on the edge of the ice, and then the other; it cracked under his weight; but this did not deter him. He ploughed his way inward to the centre, the ice making sharp noises as he went. When just about the middle he looked around him and gave a jump. The cracking repeated itself; but he did not go down. He jumped again, but the cracking had ceased. Jude went back to the edge, and stepped upon the ground.

It was curious, he thought. What was he reserved for? He supposed he was not a sufficiently dignified person for suicide. Peaceful death abhorred him as a subject, and would not take him.

What could he do of a lower kind than self-extermination; what was there less noble, more in keeping with his present degraded position? He could get drunk. Of course that was it; he had forgotten. Drinking was the regular, stereotyped resource of the despairing worthless. He began to see now why some men boozed at inns. He struck down the hill northward, and came to an obscure public-house. On entering and sitting down the sight of the picture of Samson and Delilah on the wall caused him to recognize the place as that he had visited with Arabella on that first Sunday evening of their courtship. He called for liquor, and drank briskly for an hour or more.

Staggering homeward late that night, with all his sense of depression gone, and his head fairly clear still, he began to laugh boisterously, and to wonder how Arabella would receive him in his new aspect. The house was in darkness when he entered, and in his stumbling state it was some time before he could get a light. Then he found that, though the marks of pig-dressing, of fats and scallops, were visible, the materials themselves had been taken away. A line written by his wife on the inside of an old

envelope was pinned to the cotton blower of the fireplace:

"*Have gone to my friends. Shall not return.*"

All the next day he remained at home, and sent off the carcass of the pig to Alfredston. He then cleaned up the premises, locked the door, put the key in a place she would know if she came back, and returned to his masonry at Alfredston.

At night when he again plodded home he found she had not visited the house. The next day went in the same way, and the next. Then there came a letter from her.

That she had grown tired of him she frankly admitted. He was such a slow old coach, and she did not care for the sort of life he led. There was no prospect of his ever bettering himself or her. She further went on to say that her parents had, as he knew, for some time considered the question of emigrating to Australia, the pig-jobbing business being a poor one nowadays. They had at last decided to go, and she proposed to go with them, if he had no objection. A woman of her sort would have more chance over there than in this stupid country.

Jude replied that he had not the least objection to her going. He thought it a wise course, since she wished to go, and one that might be to the advantage of both. He enclosed in the packet containing the letter the money that had been realized by the sale of the pig, with all he had besides, which was not much.

From that day he heard no more of her except indirectly, though her father and his household did not immediately leave, but waited till his goods and other effects had been sold off. When Jude learned that there was to be an auction at the house of the Donns he packed his own household goods into a wagon, and sent them to her at the aforesaid homestead, that she might sell them with the rest, or as many of them as she should choose.

He then went into lodgings at Alfredston, and saw in a

shop-window the little handbill announcing the sale of his father-in-law's furniture. He noted its date, which came and passed without Jude's going near the place, or perceiving that the traffic out of Alfredston by the southern road was materially increased by the auction. A few days later he entered a little broker's shop in the main street of the town, and amid a heterogeneous collection of saucepans, a clothes-horse, rolling-pin, brass candlestick, swing looking-glass, and other things at the back of the shop, evidently just brought in from a sale, he perceived a little framed photograph, which turned out to be his own portrait.

It was one which he had had specially taken and framed by a local man in bird's-eye maple, as a present for Arabella, and had duly given her on their wedding-day. On the back was still to be read, "*Jude to Arabella*," with the date. She must have thrown it in with the rest of her property at the auction.

"Oh," said the broker, seeing him look at this and the other articles in the heap, and not perceiving that the portrait was of himself, "it is a small lot of stuff that was knocked down to me at a cottage sale out on the road to Marygreen. The frame is a very useful one, if you take out the likeness. You shall have it for a shilling."

The utter death of every tender sentiment in his wife, as brought home to him by this mute and undesigned evidence of her sale of his portrait and gift, was the conclusive little stroke required to demolish all sentiment in him. He paid the shilling, took the photograph away with him, and burned it, frame and all, when he reached his lodging.

Two or three days later he heard that Arabella and her parents had departed. He had sent a message offering to see her for a formal leave-taking, but she had said that it would be better otherwise, since she was bent on going, which perhaps was true. On the evening follow-

ing their emigration, when his day's work was done, he came out-of-doors after supper, and strolled in the starlight along the too familiar road towards the upland whereon had been experienced the chief emotions of his life. It seemed to be his own again.

He could not realize himself. On the old track he seemed to be a boy still, hardly a day older than when he had stood dreaming at the top of that hill, inwardly fired for the first time with ardors for Christminster and scholarship. "Yet I am a man," he said. "I have a wife. More, I have arrived at the still riper stage of having disagreed with her, disliked her, had a scuffle with her, and parted from her."

He remembered then that he was standing not far from the spot at which the parting between his father and his mother was said to have occurred.

A little farther on was the summit, whence Christminster, or what he had taken for that city, had seemed to be visible. A milestone, now, as always, stood at the roadside hard by. Jude drew near it, and felt rather than read the mileage to the city. He remembered that once on his way home he had proudly cut with his keen new chisel an inscription on the back of that milestone, embodying his aspirations. It had been done in the first week of his apprenticeship, before he had been diverted from his purposes by an unsuitable woman. He wondered if the inscription were legible still, and going to the back of the milestone brushed away the nettles. By the light of a match he could still discern what he had cut so enthusiastically so long ago:

THITHER
J. F.

The sight of it, unimpaired, within its screen of grass and nettles, lit in his soul a spark of the old fire. Surely his plan should be to move onward through good and ill—to

avoid morbid sorrow even though he did see ugliness in the world? *Bene agere et lætari*—to do good cheerfully—which he had heard to be the philosophy of one Spinoza, might be his own even now.

He might battle with his evil star, and follow out his original intention.

By moving to a spot a little way off he uncovered the horizon in a northeasterly direction. There actually rose the faint halo, a small dim nebulousness, hardly recognizable save by the eye of faith. It was enough for him. He would go to Christminster as soon as the term of his apprenticeship expired.

He returned to his lodgings in a better mood, and said his prayers.

PART II

AT CHRISTMINSTER

"*Save his own soul he hath no star.*"—SWINBURNE.

"*Notitiam primosque gradus vicinia fecit;*
Tempore crevit amor."—OVID.

I

THE next noteworthy move in Jude's life was that in which he appeared gliding steadily onward through a dusky landscape of some three years' later leafage than had graced his courtship of Arabella, and the disruption of his coarse conjugal life with her. He was walking towards Christminster City, at a point a mile or two to the southwest.

He had at last found himself clear of Marygreen and Alfredston; he was out of his apprenticeship, and, with his tools at his back, seemed to be in the way of making a new start—the start to which, barring the interruption involved in his intimacy and married experience with Arabella, he had been looking forward for about ten years.

Jude would now have been described as a young man with a forcible, meditative, and earnest rather than handsome cast of countenance. He was of dark complexion, with dark harmonizing eyes, and he wore a closely trimmed black beard of more advanced growth than is usual at his age; this, with his great mass of black curly hair, was some trouble to him in combing and washing out the stone-dust that settled on it in the pursuit of his trade. His capabilities in the latter, having been acquired in the country, were of an all-round sort, including monumental stone-cutting, Gothic free-stone work for the restoration of churches, and carving of a general kind. In London he would probably have become specialized, and have made himself a moulding mason, a "foliage sculptor"—perhaps a "statuary."

He had that afternoon driven in a cart from Alfredston to the village nearest the city in this direction, and was now walking the remaining four miles rather from choice than from necessity, having always fancied himself arriving thus.

The ultimate impulse to come had had a curious origin —one more nearly related to the emotional side of him than to the intellectual, as is often the case with young men. One day, while in lodgings at Alfredston, he had gone to Marygreen to see his old aunt, and had observed between the brass candlesticks on her mantel-piece the photograph of a pretty girlish face, in a broad hat, with radiating folds under the brim like the rays of a halo. He had asked who she was. His grand-aunt had gruffly replied that she was his cousin, Sue Bridehead, of the inimical branch of the family ; and on further questioning the old woman had replied that the girl lived in Christminster, though she did not know where, or what she was doing.

His aunt would not give him the photograph. But it haunted him ; and ultimately formed a quickening ingredient in his latent intent of following his friend the school-master thither.

He now paused at the top of a crooked and gentle declivity, and obtained his first near view of the city. Graystoned and dun-roofed, it stood within hail of the Wessex border, and almost with the tip of one small toe within it, at the northernmost point of the crinkled line along which the leisurely Thames strokes the fields of that ancient kingdom. The buildings now lay quiet in the sunset, a vane here and there on their many spires and domes giving sparkle to a picture of sober secondary and tertiary hues.

Reaching the bottom, he moved along the level way between pollard willows growing indistinct in the twilight, and soon confronted the outmost lamps of the town— some of those lamps which had sent into the sky the

gleam and glory that caught his strained gaze in his days of dreaming, so many years ago. They winked their yellow eyes at him dubiously, and as if, though they had been awaiting him all these years, in disappointment at his tarrying, they did not much want him now.

He was a species of Dick Whittington, whose spirit was touched to finer issues than a mere material gain. He went along the outlying streets with the cautious tread of an explorer. He saw nothing of the real city in the suburbs on this side. His first want being a lodging, he scrutinized carefully such localities as seemed to offer on inexpensive terms the modest type of accommodation he demanded; and, after inquiry, took a room in a suburb nick-named "Beersheba," though he did not know this at the time. Here he installed himself, and, having had some tea, sallied forth.

It was a windy, whispering, moonless night. To guide himself he opened under a lamp a map he had brought. The breeze ruffled and fluttered it, but he could see enough to decide on the direction he should take to reach the heart of the place.

After many turnings he came up to the first ancient mediæval pile that he had encountered. It was a college, as he could see by the gateway. He entered it, walked round, and penetrated to dark corners which no lamplight reached. Close to this college was another; and a little farther on another; and then he began to be encircled, as it were, with the breath and sentiment of the venerable city. When he passed objects out of harmony with its general expression he allowed his eyes to slip over them as if he did not see them.

A bell began clanging, and he listened till a hundred and one strokes had sounded. He must have made a mistake, he thought; it was meant for a hundred.

When the gates were shut, and he could no longer get into the quadrangles, he rambled under the walls and doorways, feeling with his fingers the contours of their

mouldings and carving. The minutes passed, fewer and fewer people were visible, and still he serpentined among the shadows, for had he not imagined these scenes through ten by-gone years, and what mattered a night's rest for once? High against the black sky the flash of a lamp would show crocketed pinnacles and indented battlements. Down obscure alleys, apparently never trodden now by the foot of man, and whose very existence seemed to be forgotten, there would jut into the path porticos, oriels, doorways of enriched and florid middle-age design, their extinct air being accentuated by the rottenness of the stones. It seemed impossible that modern thought could house itself in such decrepit and superseded chambers.

Knowing not a human being here, Jude began to be impressed with the isolation of his own personality, as with a self-spectre, the sensation being that of one who walked, but could not make himself seen or heard. He drew his breath pensively, and, seeming thus almost his own ghost, gave his thoughts to the other ghostly presences with which the nooks were haunted.

During the interval of preparation for this venture, since his wife and furniture's uncompromising disappearance into space, he had read and learned almost all that could be read and learned, by one in his position, of the worthies who had spent their youth within these reverend walls, and whose souls had haunted them in their maturer age. Some of them, by the accidents of his reading, loomed out in his fancy disproportionately large by comparison with the rest. The brushing of the wind against the angles, buttresses, and door-jambs were as the passing of these only other inhabitants, the tappings of each ivy leaf on its neighbor were as the mutterings of their mournful souls, the shadows as their thin shapes in nervous movement, making him comrades in his solitude. In the gloom it was as if he ran against them without feeling their bodily frames.

The streets were now deserted, but on account of these things he could not go in. There were poets abroad, of early date and of late, from the friend and eulogist of Shakespeare down to him who has recently passed into silence, and that musical one of the tribe who is still among us. Speculative philosophers passed along, not always with wrinkled foreheads and hoary hair as in framed portraits, but pink-faced, slim, and active as in youth; modern divines sheeted in their surplices, among whom the most real to Jude Fawley were the founders of the religious school called Tractarian; the well-known three, the enthusiast, the poet, and the formularist, the echoes of whose teachings had influenced him even in his obscure home. A start of aversion appeared in his fancy to move them at sight of those other sons of the place, the form in the full-bottomed wig, statesman, rake, reasoner, and skeptic; the smoothly shaven historian so ironically civil to Christianity; with others of the same incredulous temper, who knew each quad as well as the faithful, and took equal freedom in haunting its cloisters.

He regarded the statesmen in their various types, men of firmer movement and less dreamy air; the scholar, the speaker, the plodder; the man whose mind grew with his growth in years, and the man whose mind contracted with the same.

The scientists and philologists followed on in his mind-sight in an odd impossible combination, men of meditative faces, lined foreheads, and weak-eyed as bats with constant research; then official characters—such men as Governor-Generals and Lord-Lieutenants, in whom he took little interest; Chief-Justices and Lord Chancellors, silent thin-lipped figures of whom he knew barely the names. A keener regard attached to the prelates, by reason of his own former hopes. Of them he had an ample band—some men of heart, others rather men of head; he who apologized for the Church in Latin; the saintly

author of the Evening Hymn; and near them the great itinerant preacher, hymn-writer, and zealot, shadowed like Jude by his matrimonial difficulties.

Jude found himself speaking out loud, holding conversations with them, as it were, like an actor in a melodrama who apostrophizes the audience on the other side of the footlights; till he suddenly ceased with a start at his absurdity. Perhaps those incoherent words of the wanderer were heard within the walls by some student or thinker over his lamp; and he may have raised his head, and wondered what voice it was, and what it betokened. Jude now perceived that, so far as solid flesh went, he had the whole aged city to himself, with the exception of a belated townsman here and there, and that he seemed to be catching a cold.

A voice reached him out of the shade; a real and local voice:

"You've been a-settin' a long time on that plinth-stone, young man. What med you be up to?"

It came from a policeman who had been observing Jude without the latter observing him.

Jude went home and to bed, after reading up a little about these men and their several messages to the world from a book or two that he had brought with him concerning the sons of the University. As he drew towards sleep various memorable words of theirs that he had just been conning seemed spoken by them in muttering utterances; some audible, some unintelligible to him. One of the spectres (who afterwards railed at Christminster as "the home of lost causes," though Jude did not remember this) was now apostrophizing her thus:

"Beautiful city! so valuable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene! . . . Her ineffable charm keeps ever calling us to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection."

Another voice was that of the Corn Law convert, whose phantom he had just seen in the quadrangle with

the great bell. Jude thought his soul might have been shaping the historic words of his master-speech:

"Sir, I may be wrong, but my impression is that my duty towards a country threatened with famine requires that that which has been the ordinary remedy under all similar circumstances should be resorted to now, namely, that there should be free access to the food of man from whatever quarter it may come. . . . Deprive me of office to-morrow, you can never deprive me of the consciousness that I have exercised the powers committed to me from no corrupt or interested motives, from no desire to gratify ambition, for no personal gain."

Then the sly author of the immortal Chapter on Christianity: "How shall we excuse the supine inattention of the Pagan and philosophic world, to those evidences [miracles] which were presented by Omnipotence? . . . The sages of Greece and Rome turned aside from the awful spectacle, and appeared unconscious of any alterations in the moral or physical government of the world."

Then the shade of the poet, the last of the optimists:

> "How the world is made for each of us!
> . . . . . .
> And each of the Many helps to recruit
> The life of the race by a general plan."

Then one of the three enthusiasts he had seen just now, the author of the *Apologiat:*

"My argument was . . . that absolute certitude as to the truths of natural theology was the result of an assemblage of concurring and converging probabilities . . . that probabilities which did not reach to logical certainty might create a mental certitude."

The second of them, no polemic, murmured quieter things:

> "Why should we faint, and fear to live alone,
> Since all alone, so Heaven has will'd, we die?"

He likewise heard some phrases spoken by the phantom with the short face, the genial Spectator:

"When I look upon the tombs of the great, every motion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tombs of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow."

And, lastly, a gentle-voiced prelate spoke, during whose meek, familiar rhyme, endeared to him from earliest childhood, Jude fell asleep:

> "Teach me to live, that I may dread
> The grave as little as my bed.
> Teach me to die. . . ."

He did not wake till morning. The ghostly past seemed to have gone, and everything spoke of to-day. He started up in bed, thinking he had overslept himself, and then said:

"By Jove—I had quite forgotten my sweet-faced cousin, and that she's here all the time! . . . and my old school-master, too." His words about his school-master had, perhaps, less zest in them than his words concerning his cousin.

II

NECESSARY meditations on the actual, including the mean bread-and-cheese question, dissipated the phantasmal for a while, and compelled Jude to smother high thinkings under immediate needs. He had to get up and seek for work—manual work, the only kind deemed by many of its professors to be work at all.

Passing out into the streets on this errand, he found that the colleges had treacherously changed their sympathetic countenances: some were stern; some had put on the look of family vaults above ground; something barbaric loomed in the masonries of all. The spirits of the great men had disappeared.

The numberless architectural pages around him he read, naturally, less as an artist-critic of their forms than as an artisan and comrade of the dead handicraftsmen whose muscles had actually executed those forms. He examined the mouldings, stroked them as one who knew their beginning, said they were difficult or easy in the working, had taken little or much time, were trying to the arm, or convenient to the tool.

What at night had been perfect and ideal was by day the more or less defective real. Cruelties, insults, had, he perceived, been inflicted on the aged erections. The condition of several moved him as he would have been moved by maimed sentient beings. They were wounded, broken, sloughing off their outer shape in the deadly struggle against years, weather, and man.

The rottenness of these historical documents reminded him that he was not, after all, hastening on to begin the

morning practically as he had intended. He had come to work, and to live by work, and the morning had nearly gone. It was, in one sense, encouraging to think that in a place of crumbling stones there must be plenty for one of his trade to do in the business of renovation. He asked his way to the work-yard of the stone-cutter whose name had been given him at Alfredston; and soon heard the familiar sound of the rubbers and chisels.

The yard was a little centre of regeneration. Here, with keen edges and smooth curves, were forms in the exact likeness of those he had seen abraded and time-eaten on the walls. These were the ideas in modern prose which the lichened colleges presented in old poetry. Even some of those antiques might have been called prose when they were new. They had done nothing but wait, and had become poetical. How easy to the smallest building; how impossible to most men.

He asked for the foreman, and looked round among the new traceries, mullions, transoms, shafts, pinnacles, and battlements standing on the bankers half worked, or waiting to be removed. They were marked by precision, mathematical straightness, smoothness, exactitude: there in the old walls were the broken lines of the original idea; jagged curves, disdain of precision, irregularity, disarray.

For a moment there fell on Jude a true illumination; that here in the stone-yard was a centre of effort as worthy as that dignified by the name of scholarly study within the noblest of the colleges. But he lost it under stress of his old idea. He would accept any employment which might be offered him on the strength of his late employer's recommendation; but he would accept it as a provisional thing only. This was his form of the modern vice of unrest.

Moreover, he perceived that at best only copying, patching, and imitating went on here, which he fancied to be owing to some temporary and local cause. He did not at

that time see that mediævalism was as dead as a fern-leaf in a lump of coal; that other developments were shaping in the world around him, in which Gothic architecture and its associations had no place. The deadly animosity of contemporary logic and vision towards so much of what he held in reverence was not yet revealed.

Having failed to obtain work here as yet, he went away, and thought again of his cousin, whose presence somewhere at hand he seemed to feel in wavelets of interest, if not of emotion. How he wished he had that pretty portrait of her! At last he wrote to his aunt to send it. She did so, with a request, however, that he was not to bring disturbance into the family by going to see the girl or her relations. Jude, a ridiculously affectionate fellow, promised nothing, put the photograph on the mantel-piece, kissed it—he did not know why—and felt more at home. She seemed to look down and preside over his tea. It was cheering—the one thing uniting him to the emotions of the living city.

There remained the school-master — probably now a reverend parson. But he could not possibly hunt up such a respectable man just yet; so raw and unpolished was his condition, so precarious were his fortunes. Thus he still remained in loneliness. Although people moved round him, he virtually saw none. Not as yet having mingled with the active life of the place, it was largely non-existent to him. But the saints and prophets in the window-tracery, the paintings in the galleries, the statues, the busts, the gurgoyles, the corbel-heads — these seemed to breathe his atmosphere. Like all new-comers to a spot on which the past is deeply graven, he heard that past announcing itself with an emphasis altogether unsuspected by, and even incredible to, the habitual residents.

For many days he haunted the cloisters and quadrangles of the colleges at odd minutes in passing them, surprised by impish echoes of his own footsteps, smart as the blows of a mallet. The Christminster "sentiment," as it

had been called, ate further and further into him, till he probably knew more about those buildings materially, artistically, and historically than any one of their inmates.

It was not till now, when he found himself actually on the spot of his enthusiasm, that Jude perceived how far away from the object of that enthusiasm he really was. Only a wall divided him from those happy young contemporaries of his with whom he shared a common mental life; men who had nothing to do from morning till night but to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest. Only a wall—but what a wall!

Every day, every hour, as he went in search of labor, he saw them going and coming also, rubbed shoulders with them, heard their voices, marked their movements. The conversation of some of the more thoughtful among them seemed oftentimes, owing to his long and persistent preparation for this place, to be peculiarly akin to his own thoughts. Yet he was as far from them as if he had been at the antipodes. Of course he was. He was a young workman in a white blouse, and with stone-dust in the creases of his clothes; and in passing him they did not even see him, or hear him, rather saw through him as through a pane of glass at their familiars beyond. Whatever they were to him, he to them was not on the spot at all; and yet he had fancied he would be close to their lives by coming there.

But the future lay ahead, after all; and if he could only be so fortunate as to get into good employment, he would put up with the inevitable. So he thanked God for his health and strength, and took courage. For the present he was outside the gates of everything, colleges included; perhaps some day he would be inside. Those palaces of light and leading; he might some day look down on the world through their panes.

At length he did receive a message from the stonemason's yard—that a job was waiting for him. It was his first encouragement, and he closed with the offer promptly.

He was young and strong, or he never could have executed with such zest the undertakings to which he now applied himself, since they involved reading most of the night after working all the day. First he bought a shaded lamp for four and sixpence, and obtained a good light. Then he got pens, paper, and such other necessary books as he had been unable to obtain elsewhere. Then, to the consternation of his landlady, he shifted all the furniture of his room—a single one for living and sleeping—rigged up a curtain on a rope across the middle, to make a double chamber out of one, hung up a thick blind that nobody should know how he was curtailing the hours of sleep, laid out his books, and sat down.

Having been deeply encumbered by marrying, getting a cottage, and buying the furniture which had disappeared in the wake of his wife, he had never been able to save any money since the time of those disastrous ventures; and till his wages began to come in he was obliged to live in the narrowest way. After buying a book or two he could not even afford himself a fire; and when the nights reeked with the raw and cold air from the Meadows, he sat over his lamp in a great-coat, hat, and woollen gloves.

From his window he could perceive the spire of the Cathedral, and the ogee dome under which resounded the great bell of the city. The tall tower, tall belfry windows, and tall pinnacles of the college by the bridge he could also get a glimpse of by going to the staircase. These objects he used as stimulants when his faith in the future was dim.

Like enthusiasts in general, he made no inquiries into details of procedure. Picking up general notions from casual acquaintance, he never dwelt upon them. For the present, he said to himself, the one thing necessary was to get ready by accumulating money and knowledge, and await whatever chances were afforded to such a one of becoming a son of the University. "For wisdom is a

defence, and money is a defence; but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it." His desire absorbed him, and left no part of him to weigh its practicability.

At this time he received a nervously anxious letter from his poor old aunt, on the subject which had previously distressed her — a fear that Jude would not be strong-minded enough to keep away from his cousin Sue Bridehead and her relations. Sue's parents, his aunt believed, had gone to London, but the girl remained at Christminster. To make her still more objectionable, she was an artist or designer of some sort in what was called an ecclesiastical warehouse, which was a perfect seed-bed of idolatry, and she was no doubt abandoned to mummeries on that account — if not quite a Papist. (Miss Drusilla Fawley was of her date, Evangelical.)

As Jude was rather on an intellectual track than a theological, this news of Sue's probable opinions did not much influence him one way or the other, but the clew to her whereabouts was decidedly interesting. With an altogether singular pleasure he walked at his earliest spare minutes past the shops answering to his great-aunt's description, and beheld in one of them a young girl sitting behind a desk, who was suspiciously like the original of the portrait. He ventured to enter on a trivial errand, and having made his purchase, lingered on the scene. The shop seemed to be kept entirely by women. It contained Anglican books, stationery, texts, and fancy goods; little plaster angels on brackets, Gothic-framed pictures of saints, ebony crosses that were almost crucifixes, prayer-books that were almost missals. He felt very shy of looking at the girl at the desk; she was so pretty that he could not believe it possible that she should belong to him. Then she spoke to one of the two older women behind the counter; and he recognized in the accents certain qualities of his own voice; softened and sweetened, but his own. What was she doing? He stole a glance

round. Before her lay a piece of zinc, cut to the shape of a scroll three or four feet long, and coated with a dead-surface paint on one side. Hereon she was designing, or illuminating, in characters of Church text, the single word

ALLELUIA

"A sweet, saintly, Christian business, hers!" thought he.

Her presence here was now fairly enough explained, her skill in work of this sort having no doubt been acquired from her father's occupation as an ecclesiastical worker in metal. The lettering on which she was engaged was clearly intended to be fixed up in some chancel to assist devotion.

He came out. It would have been easy to speak to her there and then, but it seemed scarcely honorable towards his aunt to disregard her request so incontinently. She had used him roughly, but she had brought him up; and the fact of her being powerless to control him lent a pathetic force to a wish that would have been inoperative as an argument.

So Jude gave no sign. He would not call upon Sue just yet. He had other reasons against doing so when he had walked away. She seemed so dainty beside himself in his rough working-jacket and dusty trousers that he felt he was as yet unready to encounter her, as he had felt about Mr. Phillotson. And how possible it was that she had inherited the antipathies of her family, and would scorn him, as far as a Christian could, particularly when he had told her that unpleasant part of his history which had resulted in his becoming enchained to one of her own sex whom she would certainly not admire.

Thus he kept watch over her, and liked to feel she was there. The consciousness of her living presence stimulated him. But she remained more or less an ideal char-

acter, about whose form he began to weave curious and fantastic day-dreams.

Between two and three weeks afterwards Jude was engaged with some more men, outside Crozier College in Old-time Street, in getting a block of worked freestone from a wagon across the pavement, before hoisting it to the parapet which they were repairing. Standing in position, the head man said, "Spaik when ye heave! He-ho!" And they heaved.

All of a sudden, as he lifted, his cousin stood close to his elbow, pausing a moment on the bend of her foot till the obstructing object should have been removed. She looked right into his face with liquid, untranslatable eyes, that combined, or seemed to him to combine, keenness with tenderness, and mystery with both, their expression, as well as that of her lips, taking its life from some words just spoken to a companion, and being carried on into his face quite unconsciously. She no more observed his presence than that of the dust-motes which his manipulations raised into the sunbeams.

His closeness to her was so suggestive that he trembled, and turned his face away with a shy instinct to prevent her recognizing him, though as she had never once seen him she could not possibly do so, and might very well never have heard even his name. He could perceive that though she was a country-girl at bottom, a latter girlhood of some years in London, and a womanhood here, had taken all rawness out of her.

When she was gone he continued his work, reflecting on her. He had been so caught by her influence that he had taken no count of her general mould and build. He remembered now that she was not a large figure, that she was light and slight, of the type dubbed elegant. That was about all he had seen. There was nothing statuesque in her; all was nervous motion. She was mobile, living, yet a painter might not have called her handsome or beautiful. But the much that she was sur-

prised him. She was quite a long way removed from the rusticity that was his. How could one of his cross-grained, unfortunate, almost accursed stock, have contrived to reach this pitch of niceness? London had done it, he supposed.

From this moment the emotion which had been accumulating in his breast as the bottled-up effect of solitude and the poetized locality he dwelt in, insensibly began to precipitate itself on this half-visionary form; and he perceived that, whatever his obedient wish in a contrary direction, he would soon be unable to resist the desire to make himself known to her.

He affected to think of her quite in a family way, since there were crushing reasons why he should not and could not think of her in any other.

The first reason was that he was married, and it would be wrong. The second was that they were cousins. It was not well for cousins to fall in love, even when circumstances seemed to favor the passion. The third, even were he free, in a family like his own, where marriage usually meant a tragic sadness, marriage with a blood-relation would duplicate the adverse conditions, and a tragic sadness might be intensified to a tragic horror.

Therefore, again, he would have to think of Sue with only a relation's mutual interest in one belonging to him; regard her in a practical way as some one to be proud of; to talk and nod to; later on, to be invited to tea by, the emotion spent on her being rigorously that of a kinsman and well-wisher. So would she be to him a kindly star, an elevating power, a companion in Anglican worship, a tender friend.

III

But under the various deterrent influences Jude's instinct was to approach her timidly, and the next Sunday he went to the morning service in the Cathedral-church of Cardinal College to gain a further view of her, for he had found that she frequently attended there.

She did not come, and he awaited her in the afternoon, which was finer. He knew that if she came at all she would approach the building along the eastern side of the great green quadrangle from which it was accessible, and he stood in a corner while the bell was going. A few minutes before the hour for service she appeared as one of the figures walking along under the College walls, and at sight of her he advanced up the side opposite, and followed her into the building, more than ever glad that he had not as yet revealed himself. To see her, and to be himself unseen and unknown, was enough for him at present.

He lingered a while in the vestibule, and the service was some way advanced when he was put into a seat. It was a louring, mournful, still afternoon, when a religion of some sort seems a necessity to ordinary practical men, and not only a luxury of the emotional and leisured classes. In the dim light and the baffling glare of the clere-story windows he could discern the opposite worshippers indistinctly only, but he saw that Sue was among them. He had not long discovered the exact seat that she occupied when the chanting of the 119th Psalm, in which the choir was engaged, reached its second part, *In*

quo corriget, the organ changing to a pathetic Gregorian tune as the singers gave forth :

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?"

It was the very question that was engaging Jude's attention at this moment. What a wicked worthless fellow he had been to give vent as he had done to an animal passion for a woman, and allow it to lead to such disastrous consequences; then to think of putting an end to himself; then to go recklessly and get drunk. The great waves of pedal music tumbled round the choir, and, nursed on the supernatural as he had been, it is not wonderful that he could hardly believe that the psalm was not specially set by some regardful Providence for this moment of his first entry into the solemn building. And yet it was the ordinary psalm for the twenty-fourth evening of the month.

The girl for whom he was beginning to nourish an extraordinary tenderness was at this time ensphered by the same harmonies as those which floated into his ears; and the thought was a delight to him. She was probably a frequenter of this place, and, steeped body and soul in church sentiment as she must be by occupation and habit, had, no doubt, much in common with him. To an impressionable and lonely young man the consciousness of having at last found anchorage for his thoughts, which promised to supply both social and spiritual possibilities, was like the dew of Hermon, and he remained throughout the service in a sustaining atmosphere of ecstasy.

Though he was loth to suspect it, some people might have said to him that the atmosphere blew as distinctly from Cyprus as from Galilee.

Jude waited till she had left her seat and passed under the screen before he himself moved. She did not look towards him, and by the time he reached the door she was half-way down the broad path. Being dressed up in

his Sunday suit, he was inclined to follow her and reveal himself. But he was not quite ready; and, alas, ought he to do so with the kind of feeling that was awakening in him?

For though it had seemed to have an ecclesiastical basis during the service, and he had persuaded himself that such was the case, he could not altogether be blind to the real nature of the magnetism. She was such a stranger that the kinship was affectation, and he said, "It can't be! I, a man with a wife, must not know her!" Still, Sue *was* his own kin, and the fact of his having a wife, even though she was not in evidence in this hemisphere, might be a help in one sense. It would put all thought of a tender wish on his part out of Sue's mind, and make her intercourse with him free and fearless. It was with some heartache that he saw how little he cared for the freedom and fearlessness that would result in her from such knowledge.

Some little time before the date of this service in the Cathedral the pretty, liquid-eyed, light-footed young woman, Sue Bridehead, had an afternoon's holiday, and leaving the ecclesiastical establishment, in which she not only assisted but lodged, took a walk into the country with a book in her hand. It was one of those cloudless days which sometimes occur in Wessex and elsewhere between days of cold and wet, as if intercalated by caprice of the weather-god. She went along for a mile or two until she came to much higher ground than that of the city she had left behind her. The road passed between green fields, and coming to a stile Sue paused there, to finish the page she was reading, and then looked back at the towers and domes and pinnacles, new and old.

On the other side of the stile, in the foot-path, she beheld a foreigner with black hair and a sallow face, sitting on the grass beside a large square board, whereon were fixed, as closely as they could stand, a number of plaster

statuettes, some of them bronzed, which he was re-arranging before proceeding with them on his way. They were in the main reduced copies of ancient marbles, and comprised divinities of a very different character from those the girl was accustomed to see portrayed, among them being a Venus of standard pattern, a Diana, and, of the other sex, Apollo, Bacchus, and Mars. Though the figures were many yards away from her, the southwest sun brought them out so brilliantly against the green herbage that she could discern their contours with luminous distinctness; and being almost in a line between herself and the church towers of the city, they awoke in her an oddly foreign and contrasting set of ideas by comparison. The man rose, and, seeing her, politely took off his cap, and cried, "I i-i-mages!" in an accent that agreed with his appearance. In a moment he dexterously lifted upon his knee the great board with its assembled notabilities, divine and human, and raised it to the top of his head, bringing them on to her, and resting the board on the stile. First he offered her his smaller wares — the busts of kings and queens, then a minstrel, then a winged Cupid. She shook her head.

"How much are these two?" she said, touching with her finger the Venus and the Apollo—the largest figures on the tray.

He said she should have them for ten shillings.

"I cannot afford that," said Sue. She offered considerably less, and, to her surprise, the image-man drew them from their wire stay and handed them over the stile. She clasped them as treasures.

When they were paid for, and the man had gone, she began to be concerned as to what she should do with them. They seemed so very large now that they were in her possession, and so very naked. Being of a nervous temperament, she trembled at her enterprise. When she handled them the white pipe-clay came off on her gloves and jacket. After carrying them along a little way

openly, an idea came to her, and pulling some huge burdock leaves, parsley, and other rank growth from the hedge, she wrapped up her burden as well as she could in these, so that what she carried appeared to be an enormous armful of green stuff, gathered by a zealous lover of nature.

"Well, anything is better than those everlasting church fal-lals!" she said. But she was still in a trembling state, and seemed almost to wish she had not bought the figures.

Occasionally peeping inside the leaves to see that Venus's arm was not broken, she entered with her heathen load into the most Christian city in the country by an obscure street running parallel to the main one, and round a corner to the side-door of the establishment to which she was attached. Her purchases were taken straight up to her own chamber, and she at once attempted to lock them in a box that was her very own property; but finding them too cumbersome, she wrapped them in large sheets of brown paper, and stood them on the floor in a corner.

The mistress of the house, Miss Fontover, was an elderly lady in spectacles, dressed almost like an abbess; a dab at Ritual as became one of her business, and a worshipper at the ceremonial church of St. Silas, in the suburb of Beersheba before mentioned, which Jude also had begun to attend. She was the daughter of a clergyman in reduced circumstances, and at his death, which had occurred several years before this date, she boldly avoided penury by taking over a little shop of church requisites and developing it to its present creditable proportions. She wore a cross and beads round her neck as her only ornament, and knew the Christian Year by heart.

She now came to call Sue to tea, and, finding that the girl did not respond for a moment, entered the room just as the other was hastily putting a string round each parcel.

"Something you have been buying, Miss Bridehead?" she asked, regarding the enwrapped objects.

"Yes—just something to ornament my room," said Sue.

"Well, I should have thought I had put enough here already," said Miss Fontover, looking round at the Gothic-framed prints of saints, the Church-text scrolls, and other articles which, having become too stale to sell, had been used to furnish this obscure chamber. "What is it? How bulky!" She tore a little hole, about as big as a wafer, in the brown paper, and tried to peep in. "Why, statuary? Two figures? Where did you get them?"

"Oh — I bought them of a travelling man who sells casts—"

"Two saints?"

"Yes."

"What ones?"

"St. Peter and St.—St. Mary Magdalen."

"Well—now come down to tea, and go and finish that organ-text, if there's light enough afterwards."

These little obstacles to the indulgence of what had been the merest passing fancy created in Sue a great zest for unpacking her objects and looking at them; and at bedtime, when she was sure of being undisturbed, she unrobed the divinities in comfort. Placing the pair of figures on the chest of drawers, a candle on each side of them, she withdrew to the bed, flung herself down thereon, and began reading a book she had taken from her box, which Miss Fontover knew nothing of. It was a volume of Gibbon, and she read the chapter dealing with the reign of Julian the Apostate. Occasionally she looked up at the statuettes, which appeared strange and out of place amid the other objects and pictures in the room, and, as if the scene suggested the action, she at length jumped up and withdrew another book from her box—a volume of verse—and turned to the familiar poem,

> "Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean:
> The world has grown gray from thy breath!"

which she read to the end. Presently she put out the candles, undressed, and finally extinguished her own light.

She was of an age which usually sleeps soundly, yet to-night she kept waking up, and every time she opened her eyes there was enough diffused light from the window to show her the white plaster figures, standing on the chest of drawers in odd contrast to their environment of text and martyr, and the Gothic-framed symbol picture of what was only discernible now as a Latin cross, the figure thereon being obscured by the shades.

On one of these occasions the church clocks struck some small hour. It fell upon the ears of another person, who sat bending over his books at a not very distant spot in the same city. Being Saturday night, the morrow was one on which Jude had not set his alarm-clock to call him at his usually early time, and hence he had stayed up, as was his custom, two or three hours later than he could afford to do on any other day of the week. Just then he was earnestly reading from his Griesbach's text. At the very time that Sue was reading, the policeman and belated citizens passing along under his window might have heard, if they had stood still, strange syllables mumbled with fervor within—words that had for Jude an indescribable enchantment; inexplicable sounds something like these:

"All hemin eis Theos ho Pater, ex ou ta panta, kai hemeis eis auton:"

Till the sounds rolled with reverent loudness, as a book was heard to close:

"Kai eis Kurios Iesous Christos, di ou ta panta kai hemeis di autou!"

IV

He was a handy man at his trade, an all-round man, as artisans in country towns are apt to be. In London the man who carves the boss or knob of leafage declines to cut the fragment of moulding which merges in that leafage, as if it were a degradation to do the second half of one whole. When there was not much Gothic moulding for Jude to run, or much window-tracery on the bankers, he would go out lettering monuments or tombstones, and take a pleasure in the change of handiwork.

The next time that he saw her was when he was on a ladder executing a job of this sort inside one of the churches. There was a short morning service, and when the parson entered Jude came down from his ladder, and sat with the half-dozen people forming the congregation, till the prayers should be ended, and he could resume his tapping. He did not observe till the service was half over that one of the women was Sue, who had accompanied the elderly Miss Fontover thither.

Jude sat watching her pretty shoulders, her easy, curiously nonchalant, risings and sittings, and her perfunctory genuflections, and thought what a help such an Anglican would have been to him in happier circumstances. It was not so much his anxiety to get on with his work that made him go up to it immediately the worshippers began to take their leave; it was that he dared not, in this holy spot, confront the woman who was beginning to influence him in such an indescribable manner. Those three enormous reasons why he must not attempt intimate acquaintance with Sue Bridehead, now that his interest in her

had shown itself to be unmistakably of a sexual kind, loomed as stubbornly as ever. But it was also obvious that man could not live by work alone; that the particular man Jude, at any rate, wanted something to love. Some men would have rushed incontinently to her, snatched the pleasure of easy friendship, which she could hardly refuse, and have left the rest to chance. Not so Jude—at first.

But as the days, and still more particularly the lonely evenings, dragged along, he found himself, to his moral consternation, to be thinking more of her instead of thinking less of her, and experiencing a fearful bliss in doing what was erratic, informal, and unexpected. Surrounded by her influence all day, walking past the spots she frequented, he was always thinking of her, and was obliged to own to himself that his conscience was likely to be the loser in this battle.

To be sure, she was almost an ideality to him still. Perhaps to know her would be to cure himself of this unexpected and unauthorized passion. A voice whispered that, though he desired to know her, he did not desire to be cured.

There was not the least doubt that from his own orthodox point of view the situation was growing immoral. For Sue to be the loved one of a man who was licensed by the laws of his country to love Arabella and none other unto his life's end, was a pretty bad second beginning, when the man was bent on such a course as Jude purposed. This conviction was so real with him that one day when, as was frequent, he was at work in a neighboring village church alone, he felt it to be his duty to pray against his weakness. But much as he wished to be an exemplar in these things, he could not get on. It was quite impossible, he found, to ask to be delivered from temptation when your heart's desire was to be tempted unto seventy times seven. So he excused himself. "After all," he said, "it is not altogether an *erotolepsy* that is

the matter with me, as at that first time. I can see that she is exceptionally bright; and it is partly a wish for intellectual sympathy, and a craving for loving kindness in my solitude." Thus he went on adoring her, fearing to realize that it was human perversity. For whatever Sue's virtues, talents, or ecclesiastical saturation, it was certain that those items were not at all the cause of his affection for her.

On an afternoon at this time a young girl entered the stone-mason's yard with some hesitation, and, lifting her skirts to avoid draggling them in the white dust, crossed towards the office.

"That's a nice girl," said one of the men known as Uncle Joe.

"Who is she?" asked another.

"I don't know—I've seen her about here and there. Why, yes, she's the daughter of that clever chap Bridehead, who did all the wrought ironwork at St. Luke's ten years ago, and went away to London afterwards. I don't know what he's doing now—not much, I fancy—as she's come back here."

Meanwhile the young woman had knocked at the office door, and asked if Mr. Jude Fawley was at work in the yard. It so happened that Jude had gone out somewhere or other that afternoon, which information she received with a look of disappointment, and went away immediately. When Jude returned they told him, and described her, whereupon he exclaimed, "Why—that's my cousin Sue!"

He looked along the street after her, but she was out of sight. He had no longer any thought of a conscientious avoidance of her, and resolved to call upon her that very evening. And when he reached his lodging he found a note from her—a first note—one of those documents which, simple and commonplace in themselves, are seen retrospectively to have been pregnant with impassioned consequences. The very unconsciousness of a

looming drama which is shown in such innocent first epistles from women to men, or *vice versa*, makes them, when such a drama follows, and they are read over by the purple or lurid light of it, all the more impressive, solemn, and, in cases, terrible.

Sue's was of the most artless and natural kind. She addressed him as her dear cousin Jude; said she had only just learned by the merest accident that he was living in Christminster, and reproached him with not letting her know. They might have had such nice times together, she said, for she was thrown much upon herself, and had hardly any congenial friend. But now there was every probability of her soon going away, so that the chance of companionship would be lost perhaps forever.

A cold sweat overspread Jude at the news that she was going away. That was a contingency he had never thought of, and it spurred him to write all the more quickly to her. He would meet her that very evening, he said, one hour from the time of writing, at the cross in the pavement which marked the spot of the martyrdoms.

When he had despatched the note by a boy he regretted that in his hurry he should have suggested to her to meet him out-of-doors, when he might have said he would call upon her. It was, in fact, the country custom to meet thus, and nothing else had occurred to him. Arabella had been met in the same way, unfortunately, and it might not seem respectable to a dear girl like Sue. However, it could not be helped now, and he moved towards the point a few minutes before the hour, under the glimmer of the newly-lighted lamps.

The broad street was silent and almost deserted, although it was not late. He saw a figure on the other side, which turned out to be hers, and they both converged towards the cross-mark at the same moment. Before either had reached it she called out to him:

"I am not going to meet you just there, for the first time in my life! Come farther on."

The voice, though positive and silvery, had been tremulous. They walked on in parallel lines, and, waiting her pleasure, Jude watched till she showed signs of closing in, when he did likewise, the place being where the carriers' carts stood in the daytime, though there were none on the spot then.

"I am sorry that I asked you to meet me, and didn't call," began Jude, with the bashfulness of a lover. "But I thought it would save time if we were going to walk."

"Oh—I don't mind that," she said, with the freedom of a friend. "I have really no place to ask anybody in to. What I meant was that the place you chose was so horrid—I suppose I ought not to say horrid—I mean gloomy and inauspicious. . . . But isn't it funny to begin like this, when I don't know you yet?" She looked him up and down curiously, though Jude did not look much at her. "You seem to know me more than I know you," she added.

"Yes—I have seen you now and then."

"And you knew who I was, and didn't speak? And now I am going away!"

"Yes. That's unfortunate. I have hardly any other friend. I have, indeed, one very old friend here somewhere, but I don't quite like to call on him just yet. I wonder if you know anything of him—Mr. Phillotson? A parson somewhere about the country, I think he is."

"No—I only know of one Mr. Phillotson. He lives a little way out in the country, at Lumsdon. He's a village school-master."

"Ah! I wonder if he's the same. Surely it is impossible! Only a school-master still! Do you know his Christian name—is it Richard?"

"Yes—it is; I've directed books to him, though I've never seen him."

"Then he couldn't do it!"

Jude's countenance fell, for how could he succeed in an enterprise wherein the great Phillotson had failed? He

would have had a day of despair if the news had not arrived during his sweet Sue's presence, but even at this moment he had visions of how Phillotson's failure in the grand University scheme would depress him when she had gone.

"As we are going to take a walk, suppose we go and call upon him?" said Jude, suddenly. "It is not late."

She agreed, and they went along up a hill, and through some prettily wooded country. Presently the embattled tower and square turret of the church rose into the sky, and then the school-house. They inquired of a person in the street if Mr. Phillotson was likely to be at home, and were informed that he was always at home. A knock brought him to the school-house door, with a candle in his hand, and a look of inquiry on his face, which had grown thin and careworn since Jude last set eyes on him.

That after all these years the meeting with Mr. Phillotson should be of this homely complexion destroyed at one stroke the halo which had surrounded the schoolmaster's figure in Jude's imagination ever since their parting. It created in him at the same time a sympathy with Phillotson as an obviously much chastened and disappointed man. Jude told him his name, and said he had come to see him as an old friend who had been kind to him in his youthful days.

"I don't remember you in the least," said the schoolmaster, thoughtfully. "You were one of my pupils, you say? Yes, no doubt; but they number so many thousands at this time of my life, and have naturally changed so much, that I remember very few except the quite recent ones."

"It was out at Marygreen," said Jude, wishing he had not come.

"Yes. I was there a short time. And is this an old pupil, too?"

"No—that's my cousin. . . . I wrote to you for some grammars, if you recollect, and you sent them?"

"A KNOCK BROUGHT HIM TO THE DOOR"

"Ah—yes! I do dimly recall that incident."

"It was very kind of you to do it. And it was you who first started me on that course. On the morning you left Marygreen, when your goods were on the wagon, you wished me good-bye, and said your scheme was to be a University man and enter the Church; that a degree was the necessary hall-mark of one who wanted to do anything as a theologian or teacher."

"I remember I thought all that privately; but I wonder I did not keep my own counsel. The idea was given up years ago."

"I have never forgotten it. It was that which brought me to this part of the country, and out here to see you to-night."

"Come in," said Phillotson. "And your cousin, too."

They entered the parlor of the school-house, where there was a lamp with a paper shade, which threw the light down on three or four books. Phillotson took it off, so that they could see each other better, and the rays fell on the nervous little face and vivacious dark eyes and hair of Sue, on the earnest features of her cousin, and on the school-master's own maturer face and figure, showing him to be a spare and thoughtful personage of five-and-forty, with a thin-lipped, somewhat refined mouth, a slightly stooping habit, and a black frock coat, which, from continued frictions, shone a little at the shoulder-blades, the middle of the back, and the elbows.

The old friendship was imperceptibly renewed, the school-master speaking of his experiences, and the cousins of theirs. He told them that he still thought of the Church sometimes, and that though he could not enter it as he had intended to do in former years, he might enter it as a licentiate. Meanwhile, he said, he was comfortable in his present position, though he was in want of a pupil-teacher.

They did not stay to supper, Sue having to be in-doors before it grew late, and the road was retraced to Christ-

minster. Though they had talked of nothing more than general subjects, Jude was surprised to find what a revelation of woman his cousin was to him. She was so vibrant that everything she did seemed to have its source in feeling. An exciting thought would make her walk ahead so fast that he could hardly keep up with her; and her sensitiveness on some points was such that it might have been misread as vanity. It was with heart-sickness he perceived that while her sentiments towards him were those of the frankest friendliness only, he loved her more than before becoming acquainted with her; and the gloom of the walk home lay not in the night overhead, but in the thought of her departure.

"Why must you leave Christminster?" he said, regretfully. "How can you do otherwise than cling to a city in whose history such men as Newman, Pusey, Ward, Keble, loom so large!"

"Yes—they do. Though how large do they loom in the history of the world? . . . What a funny reason for caring to stay! I should never have thought of it!" she laughed. "Well—I must go," she continued. "Miss Fontover, one of the partners whom I serve, is offended with me, and I with her; and it is best to go."

"How did that happen?"

"She broke some statuary of mine."

"Oh! Wilfully?"

"Yes. She found it in my room, and though it was my property, she threw it on the floor and stamped on it, because it was not according to her taste, and ground the arms and the head of one of the figures all to bits with her heel—a horrid thing!"

"Too Catholic-Apostolic for her, I suppose? No doubt she called them Popish images, and talked of the invocations of saints."

"No. . . . No, she didn't do that. She saw the matter quite differently."

"Ah! Then I am surprised!"

"Yes. It was for quite some other reason that she didn't like my patron saints. So I was led to retort upon her; and the end of it was that I resolved not to stay, but to get into an occupation in which I shall be more independent."

"Why don't you try teaching again? You once did, I heard."

"I never thought of resuming it; for I was getting on as an art-designer."

"*Do* let me ask Mr. Phillotson to let you try your hand in his school? If you like it, and go to a Training College, and become a first-class certificated mistress, you get twice as large an income as any designer or church artist, and twice as much freedom."

"Well—ask him. Now I must go in. Good-bye, dear Jude! I am so glad we have met at last. We needn't quarrel because our parents did, need we?"

Jude did not like to let her quite see how much he agreed with her, and went his way to the remote street in which he had his lodging.

To keep Sue Bridehead near him was now a desire which operated without regard of consequences, and the next evening he again set out for Lumsdon, fearing to trust to the persuasive effects of a note only. The schoolmaster was unprepared for such a proposal.

"What I rather wanted was a second year's transfer, as it is called," he said. "Of course your cousin would do, personally; but she has had no experience. Oh—she has, has she? Does she really think of adopting teaching as a profession?"

Jude said she was disposed to do so, he thought, and his ingenious arguments on her natural fitness for assisting Mr. Phillotson, of which Jude knew nothing whatever, so influenced the school-master that he said he would engage her, assuring Jude as a friend that unless his cousin really meant to follow on in the same course, and regarded this step as the first stage of an apprentice-

ship, of which her training in a normal school would be the second stage, her time would be wasted quite, the salary being merely nominal.

The day after this visit Phillotson received a letter from Jude, containing the information that he had again consulted his cousin, who took more and more warmly to the idea of tuition, and that she had agreed to come. It did not occur for a moment to the school-master and recluse that Jude's ardor in promoting the arrangement arose from any other feelings towards Sue than the instinct of co-operation common among members of the same family.

V

THE school-master sat in his homely dwelling attached to the school, both being modern erections, and he looked across the way at the old house in which his teacher Sue had a lodging. The arrangement had been concluded very quickly. A pupil-teacher who was to have been transferred to Mr. Phillotson's school had failed him, and Sue had been taken as stop-gap. All such provisional arrangements as these could only last till the next annual visit of H. M. Inspector, whose approval was necessary to make them permanent. Having taught for some two years in London, though she had abandoned that vocation of late, Miss Bridehead was not exactly an outsider, and Phillotson thought there would be no difficulty in retaining her services, which he already wished to do, though she had only been with him three or four weeks. He had found her quite as bright as Jude had described her; and what master-tradesman does not wish to keep an apprentice who saves him half his labor?

It was a little over half-past eight o'clock in the morning, and he was waiting to see her cross the road to the school, when he would follow. At twenty minutes to nine she did cross, a light hat tossed on her head, and he watched her as a curiosity. A new emanation, which had nothing to do with her skill as a teacher, seemed to surround her this morning. He went to the school also, and Sue remained governing her class at the other end of the room, all day under his eye. She certainly was an excellent teacher.

It was part of his duty to give her private lessons in

the evening, and some article in the Code made it necessary that a respectable, elderly woman should be present at these lessons when the teacher and the taught were of different sexes. Richard Phillotson thought of the absurdity of the regulation in this case, when he was old enough to be the girl's father; but he faithfully acted up to it, and sat down with her in a room where Mrs. Hawes, the widow at whose house Sue lodged, occupied herself with sewing. The regulation was, indeed, not easy to evade, for there was no other sitting-room in the dwelling.

Sometimes as she figured—it was arithmetic that they were working at—she would involuntarily glance up with a little inquiring smile at him, as if she assumed that, being the master, he must perceive all that was passing in her brain, as right or wrong. Phillotson was not really thinking of the arithmetic at all, but of her, in a novel way which somehow seemed strange to him as preceptor. Perhaps she knew that he was thinking of her thus.

For a few weeks their work had gone on with a monotony which in itself was a delight to him. Then it happened that the children were to be taken to Christminster to see an itinerant exhibition, in the shape of a model of Jerusalem, to which schools were admitted at a penny a head in the interests of education. They marched along the road two and two, she beside her class with her simple cotton sunshade, her little thumb cocked up against its stem; and Phillotson behind, in his long dangling coat, handling his walking-stick genteelly, in the musing mood which had come over him since her arrival. The afternoon was one of sun and dust, and when they entered the exhibition-room few people were present but themselves.

The model of the ancient city stood in the middle of the apartment, and the proprietor, with a fine religious philanthropy written on his features, walked round it

with a pointer in his hand, showing the young people the various quarters and places known to them by name from reading their Bibles: Mount Moriah, the Valley of Jehoshaphat, the City of Zion, the walls and the gates, outside one of which there was a large mound like a tumulus, and on the mound a little white cross. The spot, he said, was Calvary.

"I think," said Sue to the school-master, as she stood with him a little in the background, "that this model, elaborate as it is, is a very imaginary production. How does anybody know that Jerusalem was like this in the time of Christ? I am sure this man doesn't."

"It is made after the best conjectural maps, based on actual visits to the city as it now exists."

"I fancy we have had enough of Jerusalem," she said, "considering we are not descended from the Jews. There was nothing first-rate about the place, or people, after all — as there was about Athens, Rome, Alexandria, and other old cities."

"But, my dear girl, consider what it is to us!"

She was silent, for she was easily repressed; and then perceived behind the group of children clustered round the model a young man in a white flannel jacket, his form being bent so low in his intent inspection of the Valley of Jehoshaphat that he was almost hidden from view by the Mount of Olives. "Look at your cousin Jude," continued the school-master. "He doesn't think we have had enough of Jerusalem!"

"Ah—I didn't see him!" she cried, in her quick light voice. "Jude—how seriously you are going into it!"

Jude started up from his reverie, and saw her. "Oh—Sue!" he said, with a glad flush of embarrassment. "These are your school-children, of course! I saw that schools were admitted in the afternoons, and thought you might come; but I got so deeply interested that I didn't remember where I was. How it carries one back, doesn't it? I could examine it for hours, but I have only a few

minutes, unfortunately, for I am in the middle of a job out here."

"Your cousin is so terribly clever that she criticises it unmercifully," said Phillotson, with good-humored satire. "She is quite sceptical as to its correctness."

"No, Mr. Phillotson, I am not—altogether! I hate to be what is called a clever girl—there are too many of that sort now!" answered Sue, sensitively. "I only meant—I don't know what I meant—except that it was what you don't understand!"

"*I* know your meaning," said Jude, ardently (although he did not). "And I think you are quite right."

"That's a good Jude—I know *you* believe in me!" She impulsively seized his hand, and leaving a reproachful look on the school-master turned away to Jude, her voice revealing a tremor which she herself felt to be absurdly uncalled for by sarcasm so gentle. She had not the least conception how the hearts of the twain went out to her at this momentary revelation of feeling, and what a complication she was building up thereby in the futures of both.

The model wore too much of an educational aspect for the children not to tire of it soon, and a little later in the afternoon they were all marched back to Lumsdon, Jude returning to his work. He watched the juvenile flock, in their clean frocks and pinafores, filing down the street towards the country beside Phillotson and Sue, and a sad, dissatisfied sense of being out of the scheme of the latters' lives had possession of him. Phillotson had invited him to walk out and see them on Friday evening, when there would be no lessons to give to Sue, and Jude had eagerly promised to avail himself of the opportunity.

Meanwhile the scholars and teachers moved homeward, and the next day, on looking on the black-board in Sue's class, Phillotson was surprised to find upon it, skilfully drawn in chalk, a perspective view of Jerusalem, with every building shown in its place.

"I thought you took no interest in the model, and hardly looked at it?" he said.

"I hardly did," said she, "but I remembered that much of it."

"It is more than I had remembered myself."

Her Majesty's school-inspector was at that time paying "surprise-visits" in this neighborhood to test the teaching unawares; and two days later, in the middle of the morning lessons, the latch of the door was softly lifted, and in walked my gentleman, the king of terrors—to pupil teachers.

To Mr. Phillotson the surprise was not great; like the lady in the story, he had been played that trick too many times to be unprepared. But Sue's class was at the farther end of the room, and her back was towards the entrance; the inspector, therefore, came and stood behind her and watched her teaching some half-minute before she became aware of his presence. She turned, and realized that an oft-dreaded moment had come. The effect upon her timidity was such that she uttered a cry of fright. Phillotson, with a strange instinct of solicitude quite beyond his control, was at her side just in time to prevent her falling from faintness. She soon recovered herself, and laughed; but when the inspector had gone there was a reaction, and she was so white that Phillotson took her into his room, and gave her some brandy to bring her round. She found him holding her hand. "You ought to have told me," she gasped, petulantly, "that one of the inspector's surprise-visits was imminent! Oh, what shall I do! Now he'll write and tell the managers that I am no good, and I shall be disgraced forever!"

"He won't do that, my dear little girl. You are the best teacher ever I had!"

He looked so gently at her that she was moved, and regretted that she had upbraided him. When she was better she went home.

Jude in the mean time had been waiting impatiently for

Friday. On both Wednesday and Thursday he had been so much under the influence of his desire to see her that he walked after dark some distance along the road in the direction of the village, and, on returning to his room to read, found himself quite unable to concentrate his mind on the page. On Friday, as soon as he had got himself up as he thought Sue would like to see him, and made a hasty tea, he set out, notwithstanding that the evening was wet. The trees overhead deepened the gloom of the hour, and they dripped sadly upon him, impressing him with forebodings — illogical forebodings, for though he knew that he loved her, he also knew that he could not be more to her than he was.

On turning the corner and entering the village the first sight that greeted his eyes was that of two figures under one umbrella coming out of the vicarage gate. He was too far back for them to notice him, but he knew in a moment that they were Sue and Phillotson. The latter was holding the umbrella over her head, and they had evidently been paying a visit to the vicar—probably on some business connected with the school-work. And as they walked along the wet and deserted lane, Jude saw Phillotson place his arm round the girl's waist, whereupon she gently removed it; but he replaced it; and she let it remain, looking quickly round her with an air of misgiving. She did not look absolutely behind her, and therefore did not see Jude, who sank into the hedge like one struck with a blight. There he remained hidden till they had reached Sue's cottage and she had passed in, Phillotson going on to the school hard by.

"Oh, he's too old for her—too old!" cried Jude, in all the terrible sickness of hopeless, handicapped love.

He could not interfere. Was he not Arabella's? He was unable to go on farther, and retraced his steps towards Christminster. Every tread of his feet seemed to say to him that he must on no account stand in the school-master's way with Sue. Phillotson was perhaps

twenty years her senior, but many a happy marriage had been made in such conditions of age. The ironical clinch to his sorrow was given by the thought that the intimacy between his cousin and the school-master had been brought about entirely by himself.

VI

JUDE'S old and embittered aunt lay unwell at Marygreen, and on the following Sunday he went to see her—a visit which was the result of a victorious struggle against his inclination to turn aside to the village of Lumsdon and obtain a miserable interview with his cousin, in which the word nearest his heart could not be spoken, and the sight which had tortured him could not be revealed.

His aunt was now unable to leave her bed, and a great part of Jude's short day was occupied in making arrangements for her comfort. The little bakery business had been sold to a neighbor, and with the proceeds of this and her savings she was comfortably supplied with necessaries, and more, a widow of the same village living with her and ministering to her wants. It was not till the time had nearly come for him to leave that he obtained a quiet talk with her, and his words tended insensibly towards his cousin.

"Was Sue born here?"

"She was—in this room. They were living here at that time. What made 'ee ask that?"

"Oh—I wanted to know."

"Now you've been seeing her!" said the harsh old woman. "And what did I tell 'ee?"

"Well—that I was not to see her."

"Have you gossiped with her?"

"Yes."

"Then don't keep it up. She was brought up by her father to hate her mother's family; and she'll look with no favor upon a working chap like you—a townish girl as

she's become by now. I never cared much about her. A pert little thing, that's what she was too often, with her tight-strained nerves. Many's the time I've smacked her for her impertinence. Why, one day when she was walking into the pond with her shoes and stockings off, and her petticoats pulled above her knees, afore I could cry out for shame, she said: 'Move on, aunty! This is no sight for modest eyes!'"

"She was a little child then."

"She was twelve if a day."

"Well—of course. But now she's older she's of a thoughtful, quivering, tender nature, and as sensitive as—"

"Jude!" cried his aunt, springing up in bed. "Don't you be a fool about her!"

"No, no, of course not."

"Your marrying that woman Arabella was about as bad a thing as a man could possibly do for himself by trying hard. But she's gone to the other side of the world, and med never trouble you again. And there'll be a worse thing if you, tied and bound as you be, should have a fancy for Sue. If your cousin is civil to you, take her civility for what it is worth. But anything more than a relation's good wishes it is stark madness for ye to give her. If she's townish and wanton, it med bring 'ee to ruin."

"Don't say anything against her, aunt! Don't, please!"

A relief was afforded to him by the entry of the companion and nurse of his aunt, who must have been listening to the conversation, for she began a commentary on past years, introducing Sue Bridehead as a character in her recollections. She described what an odd little maid Sue had been when a pupil at the village school across the green opposite, before her father went to London—how, when the vicar arranged readings and recitations, she appeared on the platform, the smallest of them all, "in her little white frock, and shoes, and pink sash"; how she recited "Excelsior," "There was a sound of revelry by

night," and Poe's "Raven"; how during the delivery she would knit her little brows and glare round tragically, and say to the empty air, as if some real creature stood there,

> "Ghastly, grim, and ancient Raven,
> Tell me what thy lordly name is
> On the night's Plutonian shore!"

"She'd bring up the nasty carrion bird that clear," corroborated the sick woman, reluctantly, "as she stood there in her little sash and things, that you could see un a'most before your very eyes. You too, Jude, had the same trick as a child of seeming to see things in the air."

The neighbor told also of Sue's accomplishments in other kinds:

"She was not exactly a tomboy, you know; but she could do things that only boys do, as a rule. I've seen her hit in and steer down the long slide on yonder pond, with her little curls blowing, one of a file of twenty moving along against the sky like shapes painted on glass, and up the back slide without stopping. All boys except herself; and then they'd cheer her, and then she'd say, 'Don't be saucy, boys,' and suddenly run in-doors. They'd try to coax her out again. But 'a wouldn't come."

These retrospective visions of Sue only made Jude the more miserable that he was unable to woo her, and he left the cottage of his aunt that day with a heavy heart. He would fain have glanced into the school to see the room in which Sue's little figure had so glorified itself; but he checked his desire and went on.

It being Sunday evening, some villagers who had known him during his residence here were standing in a group in their best clothes. Jude was startled by a salute from one of them:

"Ye've got there right enough, then!"

Jude showed that he did not understand.

"Why, to the seat of l'arning—the 'City of Light' you

used to talk to us about as a little boy? Is it all you expected of it?"

"Yes; more!" cried Jude.

"When I was there once for an hour I didn't see much in it for my part; auld crumbling buildings, half-church, half-almshouse, and not much going on at that."

"You are wrong, John; there is more going on than meets the eye of a man walking through the streets. It is a unique centre of thought and religion — the intellectual and spiritual granary of this country. All that silence and absence of goings-on is the stillness of infinite motion—the sleep of the spinning-top, to borrow the simile of a writer."

"Oh, well, it med be all that, or it med not. As I say, I didn't see nothing of it the hour or two I was there; so I went in and had a pot o' beer, and a penny loaf, and a ha'porth o' cheese, and waited till it was time to come along home. You've j'ined a College by this time, I suppose?"

"Ah, no!" said Jude. "I am almost as far off that as ever."

"How so?"

Jude slapped his pocket.

"Just what we thought! Such places be not for such as you—only for them with plenty o' money."

"There you are wrong," said Jude, with some bitterness. "They are for such ones!"

Still, the remark was sufficient to withdraw Jude's attention from the imaginative world he had lately inhabited, in which an abstract figure, more or less himself, was steeping his mind in a sublimation of the arts and sciences, and making his calling and election sure to a seat in the paradise of the learned. He was set regarding his prospects in a cold northern light. He had lately felt that he could not quite satisfy himself in his Greek—in the Greek of the dramatists particularly. So fatigued was he sometimes after his day's work that he could not

maintain the critical attention necessary for thorough application. He felt that he wanted a coach—a friend at his elbow to tell him in a moment what sometimes would occupy him a weary month in extracting from unanticipative, clumsy books.

It was decidedly necessary to consider facts a little more closely than he had done of late. What was the good, after all, of using up his spare hours in a vague labor called "private study" without giving an outlook on practicabilities?

"I ought to have thought of this before," he said, as he journeyed back. "It would have been better never to have embarked in the scheme at all than to do it without seeing clearly where I am going, or what I am aiming at. . . . This hovering outside the walls of the colleges, as if expecting some arm to be stretched out from them to lift me inside, won't do! I must get special information."

The next week accordingly he sought it. What at first seemed an opportunity occurred one afternoon when he saw an elderly gentleman, who had been pointed out as the Head of a particular College, walking in the public path of a parklike enclosure near the spot at which Jude chanced to be sitting. The gentleman came nearer, and Jude looked anxiously at his face. It seemed benign, considerate, yet rather reserved. On second thoughts Jude felt that he could not go up and address him; but he was sufficiently influenced by the incident to think what a wise thing it would be for him to state his difficulties by letter to some of the best and most judicious of these old masters, and obtain their advice.

During the next week or two he accordingly placed himself in such positions about the city as would afford him glimpses of several of the most distinguished among the Provosts, Wardens, and other Heads of Houses; and from those he saw he ultimately selected five whose physiognomies seemed to say to him that they were appreciative and far-seeing men. To these five he addressed let-

ters, briefly stating his difficulties, and asking their opinion on his stranded situation.

When the letters were posted, Jude mentally began to criticise them; he wished they had not been sent. "It is just one of those intrusive, vulgar, pushing applications which are so common in these days," he thought. "Why couldn't I know better than address utter strangers in such a way? I may be an impostor, an idle scamp, a man with a bad character, for all that they know to the contrary. . . . Perhaps that's what I am!"

Nevertheless, he found himself clinging to the hope of some reply as to his one last chance of redemption. He waited day after day, saying that it was perfectly absurd to expect, yet expecting. While he waited he was suddenly stirred by news about Phillotson. Phillotson was giving up the school near Christminster for a larger one farther south, in Mid-Wessex. What this meant; how it would affect his cousin; whether, as seemed possible, it was a practical move of the school-master's towards a larger income, in view of a provision for two instead of one—he would not allow himself to say. And the tender relations between Phillotson and the young girl of whom Jude was passionately enamored effectually made it repugnant to Jude's tastes to apply to Phillotson for advice on his own scheme.

Meanwhile the academic dignitaries to whom Jude had written vouchsafed no answer, and the young man was thus thrown back entirely on himself, as formerly, with the added gloom of a weakened hope. By indirect inquiries he soon perceived clearly, what he had long uneasily suspected, that to qualify himself for certain open scholarships and exhibitions was the only brilliant course. But to do this a good deal of coaching would be necessary, and much natural ability. It was next to impossible that a man reading on his own system, however widely and thoroughly, even over the prolonged period of ten years, should be able to compete with those who had

passed their lives under trained teachers and had worked to ordained lines.

The other course, that of buying himself in, so to speak, seemed the only one really open to men like him, the difficulty being simply of a material kind. With the help of his information he began to reckon the extent of this material obstacle, and ascertained, to his dismay, that, at the rate at which, with the best of fortune, he would be able to save money, fifteen years must elapse before he could be in a position to forward testimonials to the Head of a College and advance to a matriculation examination. The undertaking was hopeless.

He saw what a curious and cunning glamour the neighborhood of the place had exercised over him. To get there and live there, to move among the churches and halls and become imbued with the *genius loci*, had seemed to his dreaming youth, as the spot shaped its charms to him from its halo on the horizon, the obvious and ideal thing to do. "Let me only get there," he had said with the fatuousness of Crusoe over his big boat, "and the rest is but a matter of time and energy." It would have been far better for him in every way if he had never come within sight and sound of the delusive precincts, had gone to some busy commercial town with the sole object of making money by his wits, and thence surveyed his plan in true perspective. Well, all that was clear to him amounted to this, that the whole scheme had burst up, like an iridescent soap-bubble, under the touch of a reasoned inquiry. He looked back at himself along the vista of his past years, and his thought was akin to Heine's:

> "Above the youth's inspired and flashing eyes
> I see the motley mocking fool's-cap rise."

Fortunately he had not been allowed to bring his disappointment into his dear Sue's life by involving her in this collapse. And the painful details of his awakening

to a sense of his limitations should now be spared her as far as possible. After all, she had only known a little part of the miserable struggle in which he had been engaged thus unequipped, poor, and unforeseeing.

He always remembered the appearance of the afternoon on which he awoke from his dream. Not quite knowing what to do with himself, he went up to an octagonal chamber in the lantern of a singularly built theatre that was set amidst this quaint and singular city. It had windows all round, from which an outlook over the whole town and its edifices could be gained. Jude's eyes swept all the views in succession, meditatively, mournfully, yet sturdily. Those buildings and their associations and privileges were not for him. From the roof of the great library, into which he hardly ever had time to enter, his gaze travelled on to the varied spires, halls, gables, streets, chapels, gardens, quadrangles, which composed the *ensemble* of this unrivalled panorama. He saw that his destiny lay not with these, but among the manual toilers in the shabby purlieu which he himself occupied, unrecognized as part of the city at all by its visitors and panegyrists, yet without whose denizens the hard readers could not read nor the high thinkers live.

He looked over the town into the country beyond, to the trees which screened her whose presence had at first been the support of his heart, and whose loss was now a maddening torture. But for this blow he might have borne with his fate. With Sue as companion he could have renounced his ambitions with a smile. Without her it was inevitable that the reaction from the long strain to which he had subjected himself should affect him disastrously. Phillotson had no doubt passed through a similar intellectual disappointment to that which now enveloped him. But the school-master had been since blessed with the consolation of sweet Sue, while for him there was no consoler.

Descending to the streets, he went listlessly along till

he arrived at an inn, and entered it. Here he drank several glasses of beer in rapid succession, and when he came out it was night. By the light of the flickering lamps he rambled home to supper, and had not long been sitting at table when his landlady brought up a letter that had just arrived for him. She laid it down as if impressed with a sense of its possible importance, and on looking at it Jude perceived that it bore the embossed stamp of one of the Colleges whose heads he had addressed. "*One*—at last!" cried Jude.

The communication was brief, and not exactly what he had expected; though it really was from the Master in person. It ran thus:

"BIBLIOLL COLLEGE.

"SIR,—I have read your letter with interest; and, judging from your description of yourself as a working-man, I venture to think that you will have a much better chance of success in life by remaining in your own sphere and sticking to your trade than by adopting any other course. That, therefore, is what I advise you to do. Yours faithfully, T. TETUPHENAY.

"To Mr. J. FAWLEY, Stone-cutter."

This terribly sensible advice exasperated Jude. He had known all that before. He knew it was true. Yet it seemed a hard slap after ten years of labor, and its effect upon him just now was to make him rise recklessly from the table, and, instead of reading as usual, to go downstairs and into the street. He stood at a bar and tossed off two or three glasses, then unconsciously sauntered along till he came to a spot called The Fourways in the middle of the city, gazing abstractedly at the groups of people like one in a trance, till, coming to himself, he began talking to the policeman fixed there.

That officer yawned, stretched out his elbows, elevated himself an inch and a half on the balls of his toes, smiled, and, looking humorously at Jude, said, "You've had a wet, young man."

"No; I've only begun," he replied, cynically.

Whatever his wetness, his brains were dry enough. He only heard in part the policeman's further remarks, having fallen into thought on what struggling people like himself had stood at that Crossway, whom nobody ever thought of now. It had more history than the oldest college in the city. It was literally teeming, stratified, with the shades of human groups, who had met there for tragedy, comedy, farce; real enactments of the intensest kind. At Fourways men had stood and talked of Napoleon, the loss of America, the execution of King Charles, the burning of the Martyrs, the Crusades, the Norman Conquest, possibly of the arrival of Cæsar. Here the two sexes had met for loving, hating, coupling, parting; had waited, had suffered, for each other; had triumphed over each other; cursed each other in jealousy, blessed each other in forgiveness.

He began to see that the town life was a book of humanity infinitely more palpitating, varied, and compendious than the gown life. These struggling men and women before him were the reality of Christminster, though they knew little of Christ or Minster. That was one of the humors of things. The floating population of students and teachers, who did know both in a way were not Christminster in a local sense at all.

He looked at his watch, and, in pursuit of this idea, he went on till he came to a public hall, where a promenade concert was in progress. Jude entered, and found the room full of shop youths and girls, soldiers, apprentices, boys of eleven smoking cigarettes, and light women of the more respectable and amateur class. He had tapped the real Christminster life. A band was playing, and the crowd walked about and jostled each other, and every now and then a man got upon a platform and sang a comic song.

The spirit of Sue seemed to hover round him and prevent his flirting and drinking with the frolicsome girls who

made advances—wistful to gain a little joy. At ten o'clock he came away, choosing a circuitous route homeward to pass the gates of the College whose Head had just sent him the note.

The gates were shut, and, by an impulse, he took from his pocket a lump of chalk which, as a workman, he usually carried there, and wrote along the wall:

"*I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?*"—Job xii. 3.

VII

THE stroke of scorn relieved his mind, and the next morning he laughed at his self-conceit. But the laugh was not a healthy one. He re-read the letter from the Master, and the wisdom in its lines, which had at first exasperated him, chilled and depressed him now. He saw himself as a fool indeed.

Deprived of the objects of both intellect and emotion, he could not proceed to his work. Whenever he felt reconciled to his fate as a student, there came to disturb his calm his hopeless relations with Sue. That the one affined soul he had ever met was lost to him through his marriage returned upon him with cruel persistency, till, unable to bear it longer, he again rushed for distraction to the real Christminster life. He now sought it out in an obscure and low-ceiled tavern up a court which was well known to certain worthies of the place, and in brighter times would have interested him simply by its quaintness. Here he sat more or less all the day, convinced that he was at bottom a vicious character, of whom it was hopeless to expect anything.

In the evening the frequenters of the house dropped in one by one, Jude still retaining his seat in the corner, though his money was all spent, and he had not eaten anything the whole day except a biscuit. He surveyed his gathering companions with all the equanimity and philosophy of a man who has been drinking long and slowly, and made friends with several: to wit, Tinker Taylor, a decayed church iron-monger, who appeared to have been of a religious turn in earlier years, but was

somewhat blasphemous now; also a red-nosed auctioneer; also two Gothic masons like himself, called Uncle Jim and Uncle Joe. There were present, too, some clerks, and a gown-and-surplice-maker's assistant; two ladies who sported moral characters of various depths of shade, according to their company, nicknamed "Bower o' Bliss" and "Freckles"; some horsey men "in the know" of betting circles; a travelling actor from the theatre, and two devil-may-care young men, who proved to be gownless undergraduates; they had slipped in by stealth to meet a man about bull-pups, and stayed to drink and smoke short pipes with the racing gents aforesaid, looking at their watches every now and then.

The conversation waxed general. Christminster society was criticised, the Dons, magistrates, and other people in authority being sincerely pitied for their shortcomings, while opinions on how they ought to conduct themselves and their affairs to be properly respected were exchanged in a large-minded and disinterested manner.

Jude Fawley, with the self-conceit, effrontery, and *aplomb* of a strong-brained fellow in liquor, threw in his remarks somewhat peremptorily; and his aims having been what they were for so many years, everything the others said turned upon his tongue, by a sort of mechanical craze, to the subject of scholarship and study, the extent of his own learning being dwelt upon with an insistence that would have appeared pitiable to himself in his sane hours.

"I don't care a damn," he was saying, "for any Provost, Warden, Principal, Fellow, or cursed Master of Arts in the University! What I know is that I'd lick 'em on their own ground if they'd give me a chance, and show 'em a few things they are not up to yet!"

"Hear, hear!" said the undergraduates from the corner, where they were talking privately about the pups.

"You always was fond o' books, I've heard," said Tin-

ker Taylor, "and I don't doubt what you state. Now with me 'twas different. I always saw there was more to be learnt outside a book than in; and I took my steps accordingly, or I shouldn't have been the man I am."

"You aim at the Church, I believe?" said Uncle Joe. "If you are such a scholar as to pitch yer hopes so high as that, why not give us a specimen of your scholarship? Canst say the Creed in Latin, man? That was how they once put it to a chap down in my country."

"I should think so!" said Jude, haughtily.

"Not he! Like his conceit!" screamed one of the ladies.

"Just you shut up, Bower o' Bliss!" said one of the undergraduates. "Silence!" He drank off the spirits in his tumbler, rapped with it on the counter, and announced, "The gentleman in the corner is going to rehearse the Articles of the Creed, in the Latin tongue, for the edification of the company."

"I won't!" said Jude.

"Yes—have a try!" said the surplice-maker.

"You can't!" said Uncle Joe.

"Yes, he can!" said Tinker Taylor.

"I'll swear I can!" said Jude. "Well, come now, stand me a small Scotch cold, and I'll do it straight off."

"That's a fair offer," said the undergraduate, throwing down the money for the whiskey.

The barmaid concocted the mixture with the bearing of a person compelled to live amongst animals of an inferior species, and the glass was handed across to Jude, who, having drunk the contents, stood up and began rhetorically, without hesitation:

"Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, Factorem cœli et terræ, visibilium omnium et invisibilium."

"Good! Excellent Latin!" cried one of the undergraduates, who, however, had not the slightest conception of a single word.

A silence reigned among the rest in the bar, and the

maid stood still, Jude's voice echoing sonorously into the inner parlor, where the landlord was dozing, and bringing him out to see what was going on. Jude had declaimed steadily ahead, and was continuing:

"Crucifixus etiam pro nobis: sub Pontio Pilato passus, et sepultus est. Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum scripturas."

"That's the Nicene," sneered the second undergraduate. "And we wanted the Apostles'!"

"You didn't say so! And every fool knows, except you, that the Nicene is the only historic creed!"

"Let un go on, let un go on!" said the auctioneer.

But Jude's mind seemed to grow confused soon, and he could not get on. He put his hand to his forehead, and his face assumed an expression of pain.

"Give him another glass—then he'll fetch up and get through it," said Tinker Taylor.

Somebody threw down threepence, the glass was handed, Jude stretched out his arm for it without looking, and, having swallowed the liquor, went on in a moment in a revived voice, continuing to the end with the manner of a priest leading a congregation:

"Et unam Catholicam et Apostolicam Ecclesiam. Confiteor unum Baptisma in remissionem peccatorum. Et expecto Resurrectionem mortuorum. Et vitam venturi sæculi. Amen."

"Well done!" said several, enjoying the last word, as being the first and only one they had recognized.

Then Jude seemed to shake the fumes from his brain, as he stared round upon them.

"You pack of fools!" he cried. "Which one of you knows whether I have said it or no? It might have been the Ratcatcher's Daughter in double Dutch for all that your besotted heads can tell! See what I have brought myself to—the crew I have come among!"

The landlord, who had already had his license endorsed for harboring queer characters, feared a riot, and came

"JUDE STOOD UP AND BEGAN RHETORICALLY"

outside the counter; but Jude, in his sudden flash of reason, had turned in disgust and left the scene, the door slamming with a dull thud behind him.

He hastened down the lane and round into the straight broad street, which he followed till it merged in the highway, and all sound of his late companions had been left behind. Onward he still went, under the influence of a childlike yearning for the one being in the world to whom it seemed possible to fly—an unreasoning desire, whose ill judgment was not apparent to him now. In the course of an hour, when it was between ten and eleven o'clock, he entered the village of Lumsdon, and reaching the cottage, saw that a light was burning in a down-stairs room, which he assumed, rightly as it happened, to be hers.

Jude stepped close to the wall, and tapped with his finger on the pane, saying, impatiently, "Sue, Sue!"

She must have recognized his voice, for the light disappeared from the apartment, and in a second or two the door was unlocked and opened, and Sue appeared with a candle in her hand.

"Is it Jude? Yes, it is! My dear, dear cousin, what's the matter?"

"Oh, I am—I couldn't help coming, Sue!" said he, sinking down upon the door-step. "I am so wicked, Sue—my heart is nearly broken, and I could not bear my life as it was! So I have been drinking, and blaspheming, or next door to it, and saying holy things in disreputable quarters—repeating in idle bravado words which ought never to be uttered but reverently! Oh, do anything with me, Sue—kill me—I don't care! Only don't hate me and despise me like all the rest of the world!"

"You are ill, poor dear! No, I won't despise you; of course I won't. Come in and rest, and let me see what I can do for you. Now lean on me, and don't mind." With one hand holding the candle and the other supporting him, she led him in-doors, and placed him in the only easy-chair the meagrely furnished house afforded, stretch-

ing his feet upon another, and pulling off his boots. Jude, now getting towards his sober senses, could only say, "Dear, dear Sue!" in a voice broken by grief and contrition.

She asked him if he wanted anything to eat, but he shook his head. Then telling him to go to sleep, and that she would come down early in the morning and get him some breakfast, she bade him good-night, and ascended the stairs.

Almost immediately he fell into a heavy slumber, and did not wake till dawn. At first he did not know where he was, but by degrees his situation cleared to him, and he beheld it in all the ghastliness of a right mind. She knew the worst of him—the very worst. How could he face her now? She would soon be coming down to see about breakfast, as she had said, and there would he be in all his shame confronting her. He could not bear the thought, and softly drawing on his boots, and taking his hat from the nail on which she had hung it, he slipped noiselessly out of the house.

His fixed idea was to get away to some obscure spot and hide, and perhaps pray; and the only spot which occurred to him was Marygreen. He called at his lodging in Christminster, where he found awaiting him a note of dismissal from his employer; and having packed up, he turned his back upon the city that had been such a thorn in his side and struck southward into Wessex. He had no money left in his pocket, his small savings, deposited at one of the banks in Christminster, having fortunately been left untouched. To get to Marygreen, therefore, his only course was walking; and the distance being nearly twenty miles, he had ample time to complete on the way the sobering process begun in him.

At some hour of the evening he reached Alfredston. Here he pawned his waistcoat, and having gone out of the town a mile or two, slept under a rick that night. At dawn he rose, shook off the hayseeds and stems from his

clothes, and started again, breasting the long white road up the hill to the downs, which had been visible to him a long way off, and passing the milestone at the top, whereon he had carved his hopes years ago.

He reached the ancient hamlet while the people were at breakfast. Weary and mud-bespattered, but quite possessed of his ordinary clearness of brain, he sat down by the well, thinking as he did so what a poor Christ he made. Seeing a trough of water near, he bathed his face, and went on to the cottage of his great-aunt, whom he found breakfasting in bed, attended by the woman who lived with her.

"What—out o' work?" asked his relative, regarding him through eyes sunken deep, under lids heavy as pot-covers, no other cause for his tumbled appearance suggesting itself to one whose whole life had been a struggle with material things.

"Yes," said Jude, heavily. "I think I must have a little rest."

Refreshed by some breakfast, he went up to his old room and lay down in his shirt-sleeves, after the manner of the artisan. He fell asleep for a short while, and when he awoke it was as if he had awakened in hell. It *was* hell—"the hell of conscious failure," both in ambition and in love. He thought of that previous abyss into which he had fallen before leaving this part of the country; the deepest deep he had supposed it then; but it was not so deep as this. That had been the breaking in of the outer bulwarks of his hope: this was of his second line.

If he had been a woman he must have screamed under the nervous tension which he was now undergoing. But that relief being denied to his virility, he clinched his teeth in misery, bringing lines about his mouth like those in the Laocoon, and corrugations between his brows.

A mournful wind blew through the trees, and sounded

in the chimney like the pedal notes of an organ. Each ivy leaf overgrowing the wall of the churchless churchyard hard by, now abandoned, pecked its neighbor smartly, and the vane on the new German-Gothic church in the new spot had already begun to creak. Yet apparently it was not always the out-door wind that made the deep murmurs; it was a voice. He guessed its origin in a moment or two; the curate was praying with his aunt in the adjoining room. He remembered her speaking of him. Presently the sounds ceased, and a step seemed to cross the landing. Jude sat up, and shouted "Hoi!"

The step made for his door, which was open, and a man looked in. It was a young clergyman.

"I think you are Mr. Highridge," said Jude. "My aunt has mentioned you more than once. Well, here I am, just come home; a fellow gone to the bad; though I had the best intentions in the world at one time. Now I am melancholy mad, what with drinking and one thing and another."

Slowly Jude unfolded to the curate his late plans and movements, by an unconscious bias dwelling less upon the intellectual and ambitious side of his dream, and more upon the theological, though this had, up till now, been merely a portion of the general plan of advancement.

"Now I know I have been a fool, and that folly is with me," added Jude in conclusion. "And I don't regret the collapse of my University hopes one jot. I wouldn't begin again if I were sure to succeed. I don't care for social success any more at all. But I do feel I should like to do some good thing; and I bitterly regret the Church, and the loss of my chance of being her ordained minister."

The curate, who was a new man to this neighborhood, had grown deeply interested, and at last he said: "If you feel a real call to the ministry, and I won't say from your conversation that you do not, for it is that of a thoughtful and educated man, you might enter the

Church as a licentiate. Only you must make up your mind to avoid strong drink."

"I could avoid that easily enough, if I had any kind of hope to support me!"

Part III

AT MELCHESTER

"For there was no other girl, O bridegroom, like her!"

—SAPPHO (H. T. Wharton).

I

It was a new idea—the ecclesiastical and altruistic life as distinct from the intellectual and emulative life. A man could preach and do good to his fellow-creatures without taking double-firsts in the schools of Christminster, or having anything but ordinary knowledge. The old fancy which had led on to the culminating vision of the bishopric had not been an ethical or theological enthusiasm at all, but a mundane ambition masquerading in a surplice. He feared that his whole scheme had degenerated to, even though it might not have originated in, a social unrest which had no foundation in the nobler instincts; which was purely an artificial product of civilization. There were thousands of young men on the same self-seeking track at the present moment. The sensual hind who ate, drank, and lived carelessly with his wife through the days of his vanity was a more likable being than he.

But to enter the Church in such an unscholarly way that he could not in any probability rise to a higher grade through all his career than that of the humble curate wearing his life out in an obscure village or city slum—that might have a touch of goodness and greatness in it; that might be true religion, and a purgatorial course worthy of being followed by a remorseful man.

The favorable light in which this new thought showed itself by contrast with his foregone intentions cheered Jude, as he sat there, shabby and lonely; and it may be said to have given, during the next few days, the *coup de grâce* to his intellectual career—a career which had ex-

tended over the greater part of a dozen years. He did nothing, however, for some long stagnant time to advance his new desire, occupying himself with little local jobs in putting up and lettering headstones about the neighboring villages, and submitting to be regarded as a social failure, a returned purchase, by the half-dozen or so of farmers and other country-people who condescended to nod to him.

The human interest of the new intention—and a human interest is indispensable to the most spiritual and self-sacrificing—was created by a letter from Sue, bearing a fresh postmark. She evidently wrote with anxiety, and told very little about her own doings, more than that she had passed some sort of examination for a Queen's Scholarship, and was going to enter a Training College at Melchester to complete herself for the vocation she had chosen, partly by his influence. There was a Theological College at Melchester; Melchester was a quiet and soothing place, almost entirely ecclesiastical in its tone; a spot where worldly learning and intellectual smartness had no establishment; where the altruistic feeling that he did possess would perhaps be more highly estimated than a brilliancy which he did not.

As it would be necessary that he should continue for a time to work at his trade while reading up Divinity, which he had neglected at Christminster for the ordinary classical grind, what better course for him than to get employment at the farther city, and pursue this plan of reading? That his excessive human interest in the new place was entirely of Sue's making, while at the same time Sue was to be regarded even less than formerly as proper to create it, had an ethical contradictoriness to which he was not blind. But that much he conceded to human frailty, and hoped to learn to love her only as a friend and kinswoman.

He considered that he might so mark out his coming years as to begin his ministry at the age of thirty—an age

which much attracted him as being that of his exemplar when he first began to teach in Galilee. This would allow him plenty of time for deliberate study, and for acquiring capital by his trade to help his after-course of keeping the necessary terms at a Theological College.

Christmas had come and passed, and Sue had gone to the Melchester Normal School. The time was just the worst in the year for Jude to get into new employment, and he had written suggesting to her that he should postpone his arrival for a month or so, till the days had lengthened. She had acquiesced so readily that he wished he had not proposed it—she evidently did not much care about him, though she had never once reproached him for his strange conduct in coming to her that night, and his silent disappearance. Neither had she ever said a word about her relations with Mr. Phillotson.

Suddenly, however, quite a passionate letter arrived from Sue. She was quite lonely and miserable, she told him. She hated the place she was in; it was worse than the ecclesiastical designer's; worse than anywhere. She felt utterly friendless; could he come immediately?—though when he did come she would only be able to see him at limited times, the rules of the establishment she found herself in being strict to a degree. It was Mr. Phillotson who had advised her to come there, and she wished she had never listened to him.

Phillotson's suit was not exactly prospering, evidently; and Jude felt unreasonably glad. He packed up his things and went to Melchester with a lighter heart than he had known for months.

This being the turning over a new leaf, he duly looked about for a temperance hotel, and found a little establishment of that description in the street leading from the station. When he had had something to eat he walked out into the dull winter light over the town bridge, and turned the corner towards the Close. The day was foggy,

and standing under the walls of the most graceful architectural pile in England he paused and looked up. The lofty building was visible as far as the roof-ridge; above, the dwindling spire rose more and more remotely, till its apex was quite lost in the mist drifting across it.

The lamps now began to be lighted, and, turning to the west front, he walked round. He took it as a good omen that numerous blocks of stone were lying about, which signified that the cathedral was undergoing restoration or repair to a considerable extent. It seemed to him, full of the superstitions of his beliefs, that this was an exercise of forethought on the part of a ruling Power, that he might find plenty to do in the art he practised while waiting for a call to higher labors.

Then a wave of warmth came over him as he thought how near he now stood to the bright-eyed vivacious girl with the broad forehead and pile of dark hair above it; the girl with the kindling glance, daringly soft at times—something like that of the girls he had seen in engravings from paintings of the Spanish school. She was here—actually in this Close—in one of the houses confronting this very west façade.

He went down the broad gravel path towards the building. It was an ancient edifice of the fifteenth century, once a palace, now a training-school, with mullioned and transomed windows, and a court-yard in front shut in from the road by a wall. Jude opened the gate and went up to the door through which, on inquiring for his cousin, he was gingerly admitted to a waiting-room, and in a few minutes she came.

Though she had been here such a short while, she was not as he had seen her last. All her bounding manner was gone; her curves of motion had become subdued lines. The screens and subtleties of convention had likewise disappeared. Yet neither was she quite the woman who had written the letter that summoned him. That had plainly been dashed off in an impulse which second

thoughts had somewhat regretted; thoughts that were possibly of his recent self-disgrace. Jude was quite overcome with emotion.

"You don't—think me a demoralized wretch—for coming to you as I was—and going so shamefully, Sue?"

"Oh, I have tried not to! You said enough to let me know what had caused it. I hope I shall never have any doubt of your worthiness, my poor Jude! And I am glad you have come!"

She wore a murrey-colored gown with a little lace collar. It was made quite plain, and hung about her slight figure with clinging gracefulness. Her hair, which formerly she had worn according to the custom of the day, was now twisted up tightly, and she had altogether the air of a woman clipped and pruned by severe discipline, an under-brightness shining through from the depths which that discipline had not yet been able to reach.

She had come forward prettily; but Jude felt that she had hardly expected him to kiss her, as he was burning to do, under other colors than those of cousinship. He could not perceive the least sign that Sue regarded him as a lover, or ever would do so, now that she knew the worst of him, even if he had the right to behave as one; and this helped on his growing resolve to tell her of his matrimonial entanglement, which he had put off doing from time to time in sheer dread of losing the bliss of her company.

Sue came out into the town with him, and they walked and talked with tongues centred only on the passing moments. Jude said he would like to buy her a little present of some sort, and then she confessed, with something of shame, that she was dreadfully hungry. They were kept on very short allowances in the College, and a dinner, tea, and supper all in one was the present she most desired in the world. Jude thereupon took her to an inn and ordered whatever the house afforded, which was not much. The place, however, gave them a delightful op-

portunity for a *tête-à-tête*, nobody else being in the room, and they talked freely.

She told him about the school as it was at that date, and the rough living, and the mixed character of her fellow-students, gathered together from all parts of the diocese, and how she had to get up and work by gas-light in the early morning, with all the bitterness of a young person to whom restraint was new. To all this he listened; but it was not what he wanted especially to know — her relations with Phillotson. That was what she did not tell. When they had sat and eaten, Jude impulsively placed his hand upon hers; she looked up and smiled, and took his quite freely into her own little soft one, dividing his fingers and coolly examining them, as if they were the fingers of a glove she was purchasing.

"Your hands are rather rough, Jude, aren't they?" she said.

"Yes. So would yours be if they held a mallet and chisel all day."

"I don't dislike it, you know. I think it is noble to see a man's hands subdued to what he works in.... Well, I'm rather glad I came to this Training-School, after all. See how independent I shall be after the two years' training! I shall pass pretty high, I expect, and Mr. Phillotson will use his influence to get me a big school."

She had touched the subject at last. "I had a suspicion, a fear," said Jude, "that he — cared about you rather warmly, and perhaps wanted to marry you."

"Now don't be such a silly boy!"

"He has said something about it, I expect."

"If he had, what would it matter? An old man like him!"

"Oh, come, Sue; he's not so very old. And I know what I saw him doing—"

"Not kissing me—that I'm certain!"

"No. But putting his arm round your waist."

"Ah—I remember. But I didn't know he was going to."

"You are wriggling out of it, Sue, and it isn't quite kind!"

Her ever-sensitive lip began to quiver, and her eye to blink, at something this reproof was deciding her to say.

"I know you'll be angry if I tell you everything, and that's why I don't want to!"

"Very well, then, dear," he said, soothingly. "I have no real right to ask you, and I don't wish to know."

"I shall tell you!" said she, with the perverseness that was part of her. "This is what I have done: I have promised—I have promised—that I will marry him when I come out of the Training-School two years hence, and have got my Certificate; his plan being that we shall then take a large double school in a great town—he the boys and I the girls—as married school-teachers often do, and make a good income between us."

"Oh, Sue! . . . But of course it is right—you couldn't have done better!"

He glanced at her and their eyes met, the reproach in his own belying his words. Then he drew his hand quite away from hers, and turned his face in estrangement from her to the window. Sue regarded him passively without moving.

"I knew you would be angry!" she said, with an air of no emotion whatever. "Very well—I am wrong, I suppose! I ought not to have let you come to see me! We had better not meet again; and we'll only correspond at long intervals, on purely business matters!"

This was just the one thing he would not be able to bear, as she probably knew, and it brought him round at once. "Oh yes, we will," he said, quickly. "Your being engaged can make no difference to me whatever. I have a perfect right to see you when I want to; and I shall!"

"Then don't let us talk of it any more. It is quite spoiling our evening together. What does it matter about what one is going to do two years hence!"

She was something of a riddle to him, and he let the subject drift away. "Shall we go and sit in the Cathedral?" he asked, when their meal was finished.

"Cathedral? Yes. Though I think I'd rather sit in the railway station," she answered, a remnant of vexation still in her voice. "That's the centre of the town life now. The Cathedral has had its day!"

"How modern you are!"

"So would you be if you had lived so much in the Middle Ages as I have done these last few years. The Cathedral was a very good place four or five centuries ago; but it is played out now. . . . I am not modern, either. I am more ancient than mediævalism, if you only knew."

Jude looked distressed.

"There — I won't say any more of that!" she cried. "Only you don't know how bad I am, from your point of view, or you wouldn't think so much of me, or care whether I was engaged or not. Now, there's just time for us to walk round the Close, and then I must go in, or I shall be locked out for the night."

He took her to the gate and they parted. Jude had a conviction that his unhappy visit to her on that sad night had precipitated this marriage engagement, and it did anything but add to his happiness. Her reproach had taken that shape, then, and not the shape of words. However, next day he set about seeking employment, which it was not so easy to get as at Christminster, there being, as a rule, less stone-cutting in progress in this quiet city, and hands being mostly permanent. But he edged himself in by degrees. His first work was some carving at the cemetery on the hill; and ultimately he became engaged on the labor he most desired — the Cathedral repairs, which were very extensive, the whole interior fittings having been swept away, to be replaced by new.

It might be a labor of years to get it all done, and he

had confidence enough in his own skill with the mallet and chisel to feel that it would be a matter of choice with himself how long he would stay.

The lodgings he took near the Close Gate would not have disgraced a curate, the rent representing a higher percentage on his wages than mechanics of any sort usually care to pay. His combined bed and sitting-room was furnished with framed photographs of the rectories and deaneries at which his landlady had lived as trusted servant in her time, and the parlor down-stairs bore a clock on the mantel-piece inscribed to the effect that it was presented to the same serious-minded woman by her fellow-servants on the occasion of her marriage. Jude added to the furniture of his room by unpacking photographs of the ecclesiastical carvings and monuments that he had executed with his own hands; and he was deemed a satisfactory acquisition as tenant of the vacant apartment.

He found an ample supply of theological books in the city book-shops, and with these his studies were recommenced in a different spirit and direction from his former course. As a relaxation from the Fathers, and such stock works as Paley and Butler, he read Newman, Pusey, and many other modern lights. He hired a harmonium, set it up in his lodging, and practised chants thereon, single and double.

II

"To-morrow is our grand day, you know. Where shall we go?"

"I have leave from three till nine. Wherever we can get to and come back from in that time. Not ruins, Jude —I don't care for them."

"Well—Wardour Castle. And then we can do Fonthill if we like—all in the same afternoon."

"Wardour is Gothic ruins—and I hate Gothic!"

"No. Quite otherwise. It is a classic building—Corinthian, I think; with a lot of pictures."

"Ah—that will do. I like the sound of Corinthian. We'll go."

Their conversation had run thus some few weeks later, and next morning they prepared to start. Every detail of the outing was a facet reflecting a sparkle to Jude, and he did not venture to meditate on the life of inconsistency he was leading. His Sue's conduct was one lovely conundrum to him; he could say no more.

There duly came the charm of calling at the College door for her; her emergence in a nunlike simplicity of costume that was rather enforced than desired; the traipsing along to the station, the porter's "B'your leave!" the screaming of the trains—everything formed the basis of a beautiful crystallization. Nobody stared at Sue, because she was so plainly dressed, which comforted Jude in the thought that only himself knew the charms those habiliments subdued. A matter of ten pounds spent in a drapery-shop, which had no connection with her real life or her real self, would have set all Melchester staring.

The guard of the train thought they were lovers, and put them into a compartment all by themselves.

"That's a good intention wasted!" said she.

Jude did not respond. He thought the remark unnecessarily cruel, and partly untrue.

They reached the Park and Castle and wandered through the picture-galleries, Jude stopping by preference in front of the devotional pictures by Del Sarto, Guido Reni, Spagnoletto, Sassoferrato, Carlo Dolci, and others. Sue paused patiently beside him, and stole critical looks into his face as, regarding the Virgins, Holy Families, and Saints, it grew reverent and abstracted. When she had thoroughly estimated him at this, she would move on and wait for him before a Lely or Reynolds. It was evident that her cousin deeply interested her, as one might be interested in a man puzzling out his way along a labyrinth from which one had one's self escaped.

When they came out a long time still remained to them, and Jude proposed that as soon as they had had something to eat they should walk across the high country to the north of their present position, and intercept the train of another railway leading back to Melchester, at a station about seven miles off. Sue, who was inclined for any adventure that would intensify the sense of her day's freedom, readily agreed; and away they went, leaving the adjoining station behind them.

It was indeed open country, wide and high. They talked and bounded on, Jude cutting from a little covert a long walking-stick for Sue as tall as herself, with a great crook which made her look like a shepherdess. About half-way on their journey they crossed a main road running due east and west—the old road from London to Land's End. They paused, and looked up and down it for a moment, and remarked upon the desolation which had come over this once lively thoroughfare, while the wind dipped to earth and scooped straws and hay-stems from the ground.

They crossed the road and passed on, but during the next half mile Sue seemed to grow tired, and Jude began to be distressed for her. They had walked a good distance altogether, and if they could not reach the other station it would be rather awkward. For a long time there was no cottage visible on the wide expanse of down and turnip-land; but presently they came to a sheepfold, and next to the shepherd, pitching hurdles. He told them that the only house near was his mother's and his, pointing to a little dip ahead, from which a faint blue smoke arose, and recommended them to go on and rest there.

This they did, and entered the house, admitted by an old woman without a single tooth, to whom they were as civil as strangers can be when their only chance of rest and shelter lies in the favor of the householder.

"A nice little cottage," said Jude.

"Oh, I don't know about the niceness. I shall have to thatch it soon, and where the thatch is to come from I can't tell, for straw do get that dear, that 'twill soon be cheaper to cover your house wi' chainey plates than thatch."

They sat resting, and the shepherd came in. "Don't 'ee mind I," he said, with a deprecating wave of the hand. "Bide here as long as ye will. But mid you be thinking o' getting back to Melchester to-night by train? Because you'll never do it in this world, since you don't know the lie of the country. I don't mind going with ye some o' the ways, but even then the train mid be gone."

They started up.

"You can bide here, you know, over the night—can't 'em, mother? The place is welcome to ye. 'Tis hard lying, rather, but volk may do worse." He turned to Jude and asked, privately, "Be you a married couple?"

"Hsh—no!" said Jude.

"Oh—I meant nothing ba'dy—not I! Well, then, she can go into mother's room, and you and I can lie in the

outer chimmer after they've gone through. I can call ye soon enough to catch the first train back. You've lost this one now."

On consideration they decided to close with this offer, and drew up and shared with the shepherd and his mother the boiled bacon and greens for supper.

"I rather like this," said Sue, while their entertainers were clearing away the dishes. "Outside all laws except gravitation and germination."

"You only think you like it; you don't. You are quite a product of civilization," said Jude, a recollection of her engagement reviving his soreness a little.

"Indeed, I am not, Jude. I like reading and all that, but I crave to get back to the life of my infancy and its freedom."

"Do you remember it so well? You seem to me to have nothing unconventional at all about you."

"Oh, haven't I? You don't know what's inside me."

"What?"

"The Ishmaelite."

"An urban miss is what you are."

She looked severe disagreement, and turned away.

The shepherd aroused them the next morning, as he had said. It was bright and clear, and the four miles to the train were accomplished pleasantly. When they had reached Melchester, and walked to the Close, and the gables of the old building in which she was again to be immured rose before Sue's eyes, she looked a little scared.

"I expect I shall catch it!" she murmured.

They rang the great bell and waited.

"Oh, I brought something for you, which I had nearly forgotten," she said, quickly, searching her pocket. "It is a new little photograph of me. Would you like it?"

"*Would* I!" He took it gladly, and the porter came. There seemed to be an ominous glance on his face when he opened the gate. She passed in, looking back at Jude, and waving her hand.

III

THE seventy young women, of ages varying in the main from nineteen to one-and-twenty, though several were older, who at this date filled the species of nunnery known as the Training-School at Melchester, formed a very mixed community, which included the daughters of mechanics, curates, surgeons, shopkeepers, farmers, dairymen, soldiers, sailors, and villagers. They sat in the large school-room of the establishment on the evening previously described, and word was passed round that Sue Bridehead had not come in at closing-time.

"She went out with her young man," said a second-year's student, who knew about young men. "And Miss Traceley saw her at the station with him. She'll have it hot when she does come."

"She said he was her cousin," observed a youthful new girl.

"That excuse has been made a little too often in this school to be effectual in saving our souls," said the head girl of the year, dryly.

The fact was that, only twelve months before, there had occurred a lamentable seduction of one of the pupils, who had made the same statement in order to gain meetings with her lover. The affair had created a scandal, and the management had consequently been rough on cousins ever since.

At nine o'clock the names were called, Sue's being pronounced three times sonorously by Miss Traceley without eliciting an answer.

At a quarter past nine the seventy stood up to sing

the "Evening Hymn," and then knelt down to prayers. After prayers they went in to supper, and every girl's thought was, Where is Sue Bridehead? Some of the students, who had seen Jude from the window, felt that they would not mind risking her punishment for the pleasure of being kissed by such a kindly-faced young man. Hardly one among them believed in the cousinship.

Half an hour later they all lay in their cubicles, their tender feminine faces upturned to the flaring gas-jets which at intervals stretched down the long dormitories, every face bearing the legend "The Weaker" upon it, as the penalty of the sex wherein they were moulded, which by no possible exertion of their willing hearts and abilities could be made strong while the inexorable laws of nature remain what they are. They formed a pretty, suggestive, pathetic sight, of whose pathos and beauty they were themselves unconscious, and would not discover till, amid the storms and strains of after-years, with their injustice, loneliness, child-bearing, and bereavement, their minds would revert to this experience as to something which had been allowed to slip past them insufficiently regarded.

One of the mistresses came in to turn out the lights, and before doing so gave a final glance at Sue's cot, which remained empty, and at her little dressing-table at the foot, which, like all the rest, was ornamented with various girlish trifles, framed photographs being not the least conspicuous among them. Sue's table had a moderate show, two men in their filigree and velvet frames standing together beside her looking-glass.

"Who are these men—did she ever say?" asked the mistress. "Strictly speaking, relations' portraits only are allowed on these tables, you know."

"One—the middle-aged man," said a student in the next bed—"is the school-master she served under—Mr. Phillotson."

"And the other—this undergraduate in cap and gown—who is he?"

"He is a friend, or was. She has never told his name."

"Was it either of these two who came for her?"

"No."

"You are sure 'twas not the undergraduate?"

"Quite. He was a young man with a black beard."

The lights were promptly extinguished, and till they fell asleep the girls indulged in conjectures about Sue, and wondered what games she had carried on in London and at Christminster before she came here, some of the more restless ones getting out of bed and looking from the mullioned windows at the vast west front of the Cathedral opposite and the spire rising behind it.

When they awoke the next morning they glanced into Sue's nook, to find it still without a tenant. After the early lessons by gas-light, in half-toilet, and when they had come up to dress for breakfast, the bell of the entrance gate was heard to ring loudly. The mistress of the dormitory went away, and presently came back to say that the Principal's orders were that nobody was to speak to Bridehead without permission.

When, accordingly, Sue came into the dormitory to hastily tidy herself, looking flushed and tired, she went to her cubicle in silence, none of them coming out to greet her or to make inquiry. When they had gone downstairs they found that she did not follow them into the dining-hall to breakfast, and they then learned that she had been severely reprimanded, and ordered to a solitary room for a week, there to be confined, and take her meals, and do all her reading.

At this the seventy murmured, the sentence being, they thought, too severe. A round robin was prepared and sent in to the Principal, asking for a remission of Sue's punishment. No notice was taken. Towards evening, when the geography mistress began dictating her subject, the girls in the class sat with folded arms.

"You mean that you are not going to work?" said the mistress, at last. "I may as well tell you that it has been

ascertained that the young man Bridehead stayed out with was not her cousin, for the very good reason that she has no such relative. We have written to Christminster to ascertain."

"We are willing to take her word," said the head girl.

"This young man was discharged from his work at Christminster for drunkenness and blasphemy in public-houses, and he has come here to live, entirely to be near her."

However, they remained stolid and motionless, and the mistress left the room to inquire from her superiors what was to be done.

Presently, towards dusk, the pupils, as they sat, heard exclamations from the first-year's girls in an adjoining class-room, and one rushed in to say that Sue Bridehead had got out of the back window of the room in which she had been confined, escaped in the dark across the lawn, and disappeared. How she had managed to get out of the garden nobody could tell, as it was bounded by the river at the bottom, and the side door was locked.

They went and looked at the empty room, the casement between the middle mullions of which stood open. The lawn was again searched with a lantern, every bush and shrub being examined, but she was nowhere hidden. Then the porter of the front gate was interrogated, and on reflection he said that he remembered hearing a sort of splashing in the stream at the back, but he had taken no notice, thinking some ducks had come down the river from above.

"She must have walked through the river!" said a mistress.

"Or drounded herself," said the porter.

The mind of the matron was horrified—not so much at the possible death of Sue as at the possible half-column detailing that event in all the newspapers, which, added to the scandal of the year before, would give the College an unenviable notoriety for many months to come.

More lanterns were procured, and the river examined; and then, at last, on the opposite shore, which was open to the fields, some little boot-tracks were discerned in the mud, which left no doubt that the too excitable girl had waded through a depth of water reaching nearly to her shoulders—for this was the chief river of the county, and was mentioned in all the geography books with respect. As Sue had not brought disgrace upon the school by drowning herself, the matron began to speak superciliously of her, and to express gladness that she was gone.

On the self-same evening Jude sat in his lodgings by the Close Gate. Often at this hour after dusk he would enter the silent Close, and stand opposite the house that contained Sue, and watch the shadows of the girls' heads passing to and fro upon the blinds, and wish he had nothing else to do but to sit reading and learning all day what many of the thoughtless inmates despised. But to-night, having finished tea and brushed himself up, he was deep in the perusal of the Twenty-ninth Volume of Pusey's Library of the Fathers, a set of books which he had purchased of a second-hand dealer at a price that seemed to him to be one of miraculous cheapness for that invaluable work. He fancied he heard something rattle lightly against his window; then he heard it again. Certainly somebody had thrown gravel. He rose and gently lifted the sash.

"Jude!" (from below).

"Sue!"

"Yes—it is! Can I come up without being seen?"

"Oh yes!"

"Then don't come down. Shut the window."

Jude waited, knowing that she could enter easily enough, the front door being opened merely by a knob which anybody could turn, as in most old country towns. He palpitated at the thought that she had fled to him in her trouble as he had fled to her in his. What counterparts they were! He unlatched the door of his room,

heard a stealthy rustle on the dark stairs, and in a moment she appeared in the light of his lamp. He went up to seize her hand, and found she was clammy as a marine deity, and that her clothes clung to her like the robes upon the figures in the Parthenon frieze.

"I'm so cold!" she said through her chattering teeth. "Can I come by your fire, Jude?"

She crossed to his little grate and very little fire, but as the water dripped from her as she moved the idea of drying herself was absurd. "Whatever have you done, darling?" he asked, with alarm, the tender epithet slipping out unawares.

"Walked through the largest river in the county—that's what I've done! They locked me up for being out with you; and it seemed so unjust that I couldn't bear it, so I got out of the window and escaped across the stream." She had begun the explanation in her usual slightly independent tones, but before she had finished the thin pink lips trembled, and she could hardly refrain from crying.

"Dear Sue!" he said. "You must take off all your things! And, let me see—you must borrow some from the landlady. I'll ask her."

"No, no! Don't let her know, for God's sake! We are so near the school that they'll come after me!"

"Then you must put on mine. You don't mind?"

"Oh no!"

"My Sunday suit, you know. It is close here." In fact, everything was close and handy in Jude's single chamber, because there was not room for it to be otherwise. He opened a drawer, took out his best dark suit, and giving the garments a shake, said, "Now, how long shall I give you?"

"Ten minutes."

Jude left the room and went into the street, where he walked up and down. A clock struck half-past seven, and he returned. Sitting in his only arm-chair he saw a slim and fragile being masquerading as himself on a Sun-

day, so pathetic in her defencelessness that his heart felt big with the sense of it. On two other chairs before the fire were her wet garments. She blushed as he sat down beside her, but only for a moment.

"I suppose, Jude, it is odd that you should see me like this and all my things hanging there? Yet what nonsense! They are only a woman's clothes—sexless cloth and linen. . . . I wish I didn't feel so ill and sick! Will you dry my clothes now? Please do, Jude, and I'll get a lodging by-and-by. It is not late yet."

"No, you sha'n't, if you are ill. You must stay here. Dear, dear Sue, what can I get for you?"

"I don't know. I can't help shivering. I wish I could get warm." Jude put on her his great-coat in addition, and then ran out to the nearest public-house, whence he returned with a little bottle in his hand. "Here's six of best brandy," he said. "Now you drink it, dear; all of it."

"I can't out of the bottle, can I?" Jude fetched the glass from the dressing-table, and administered the spirit in some water. She gasped a little, but gulped it down, and lay back in the arm-chair.

She then began to relate circumstantially her experiences since they had parted; but in the middle of her story her voice faltered, her head nodded, and she ceased. She was in a sound sleep. Jude, dying of anxiety lest she should have caught a chill which might permanently injure her, was glad to hear the regular breathing. He softly went nearer to her, and observed that a warm flush now rosed her hitherto blue cheeks, and felt that her hanging hand was no longer cold. Then he stood with his back to the fire regarding her, and saw in her almost a divinity.

IV

JUDE'S reverie was interrupted by the creak of footsteps ascending the stairs.

He whisked Sue's clothing from the chair where it was drying, thrust it under the bed, and sat down to his book. Somebody knocked and opened the door immediately. It was the landlady.

"Oh, I didn't know whether you was in or not, Mr. Fawley. I wanted to know if you would require supper. I see you've a young gentleman—"

"Yes, ma'am. But I think I won't come down to-night. Will you bring supper up on a tray, and I'll have a cup of tea as well."

It was Jude's custom to go down-stairs to the kitchen and eat his meals with the family to save trouble. His landlady brought up the supper, however, on this occasion, and he took it from her at the door.

When she had descended he set the teapot on the hob, and drew out Sue's clothes anew; but they were far from dry. A thick woollen gown, he found, held a deal of water. So he hung them up again, and kept up his fire, and mused as the steam from the garments went up the chimney.

Suddenly she said, "Jude!"

"Yes. All right. How do you feel now?"

"Better. Quite well. Why, I fell asleep, didn't I? What time is it? Not late, surely?"

"It is past ten."

"Is it really? What *shall* I do!" she said, starting up.

"Stay where you are?"

"Yes; that's what I want to do. But I don't know what they would say! And what will you do?"

"I am going to sit here by the fire all night and read. To-morrow is Sunday, and I haven't to go out anywhere. Perhaps you will be saved a severe illness by resting there. Don't be frightened. I'm all right. Look here what I have got for you. Some supper."

When she had sat upright she breathed plaintively and said, "I do feel rather weak still. I thought I was well; and I ought not to be here, ought I?" But the supper fortified her somewhat, and when she had had some tea, and had lain back again, she was bright and cheerful.

The tea must have been green, or too long drawn, for she seemed preternaturally wakeful afterwards, though Jude, who had not taken any, began to feel heavy, till her conversation fixed his attention.

"You called me a creature of civilization, or something, didn't you?" she said, breaking a silence. "It was very odd you should have done that."

"Why?"

"Well, because it is provokingly wrong. I am a sort of negation of it."

"You are very philosophical. 'A negation' is profound talking."

"Is it? Do I strike you as being learned?" she asked, with a touch of raillery.

"No—not learned. Only you don't talk quite like a girl—well, a girl who has had no advantages."

"I have had advantages. I don't know Latin and Greek, though I know the grammars of those tongues. But I know most of the Greek and Latin classics through translations, and other books too. I read Lemprière, Catullus, Martial, Juvenal, Lucian, Beaumont and Fletcher, Boccaccio, Scarron, De Brantôme, Sterne, De Foe, Smollett, Fielding, Shakespeare, the Bible, and other such; and found that all interest in the unwholesome part of those books ended with its mystery."

"You have read more than I," he said, with a sigh. "How came you to read some of those queerer ones?"

"Well," she said, thoughtfully, "it was by accident. My life has been entirely shaped by what people call a peculiarity in me. I have no fear of men, as such, nor of their books. I have mixed with them — one or two of them particularly — almost as one of their own sex. I mean I have not felt about them as most women are taught to feel—to be on their guard against attacks on their virtue; for no average man—no man short of a sensual savage — will molest a woman by day or night, at home or abroad, unless she invites him. Until she says by a look 'Come on' he is always afraid to; and if you never say it, or look it, he never comes. However, what I was going to say is that when I was eighteen I formed a friendly intimacy with an undergraduate at Christminster, and he taught me a great deal, and lent me books which I should never have got hold of otherwise."

"Is your friendship broken off?"

"Oh yes. He died, poor fellow, two or three years after he had taken his degree and left Christminster."

"You saw a good deal of him, I suppose?"

"Yes. We used to go about together — on walking tours, reading tours, and things of that sort—like two men almost. He asked me to live with him, and I agreed to by letter. But when I joined him in London I found he meant a different thing from what I meant. He wanted to be my lover, in fact, but I wasn't in love with him; and on my saying I should go away if he didn't agree to my plan, he did so. We shared a sitting-room for fifteen months; and he became a leader-writer for one of the great London dailies; till he was taken ill, and had to go abroad. He said I was breaking his heart by holding out against him so long at such close quarters; he could never have believed it of woman. I might play that game once too often he said. He came home merely to die. His death caused a terrible remorse in me for

my cruelty—though I hope he died of consumption, and not of me entirely. I went down to Sandbourne to his funeral, and was his only mourner. He left me a little money — because I broke his heart, I suppose. That's how men are—so much better than women!"

"Good heavens!—what did you do then?"

"Ah—now you are angry with me!" she said, a contralto note of tragedy coming suddenly into her silvery voice. "I wouldn't have told you if I had known!"

"No, I am not. Tell me all."

"Well, I invested his money, poor fellow, in a bubble scheme, and lost it. I lived about London by myself for some time, and then I returned to Christminster, as my father—who was also in London, and had started as an art metal-worker near Long Acre — wouldn't have me back; and I got that occupation in the artist shop where you found me. . . . I said you didn't know how bad I was!"

Jude looked round upon the arm-chair and its occupant, as if to read more carefully the creature he had given shelter to. His voice trembled as he said: "However you have lived, Sue, I believe you are as innocent as you are unconventional!"

"I am not particularly innocent, as you see, now that I have

"'twitched the robe
From that blank lay-figure your fancy draped,'"

said she, with an ostensible sneer, though he could hear that she was brimming with tears. "But I have never yielded myself to any lover, if that's what you mean! I have remained as I began."

"I quite believe you. But some women would not have remained as they began."

"Perhaps not. Better women would not. People say I must be cold-natured—sexless—on account of it. But I won't have it! Some of the most passionately erotic

poets have been the most self-contained in their daily lives."

"Have you told Mr. Phillotson about this University-scholar friend?"

"Yes—long ago. I have never made any secret of it to anybody."

"What did he say?"

"He did not pass any criticism—only said I was everything to him, whatever I did; and things like that."

Jude felt much depressed; she seemed to get further and further away from him with her strange ways and curious unconsciousness of gender.

"Aren't you *really* vexed with me, dear Jude?" she suddenly asked, in a voice of such extraordinary tenderness that it hardly seemed to come from the same woman who had just told her story so lightly. I would rather offend anybody in the world than you, I think!"

"I don't know whether I am vexed or not. I know I care very much about you!"

"I care as much for you as for anybody I ever met."

"You don't care *more!* There, I ought not to say that. Don't answer it!"

There was another long silence. He felt that she was treating him cruelly, though he could not quite say in what way. Her very helplessness seemed to make her so much stronger than he.

"I am awfully ignorant on general matters, although I have worked so hard," he said, to turn the subject. "I am absorbed in Theology, you know. And what do you think I should be doing just about now if you weren't here? I should be saying my evening prayers. I suppose you wouldn't like—"

"Oh no, no!" she answered; "I would rather not, if you don't mind. I should seem so—such a hypocrite."

"I thought you wouldn't join, so I didn't propose it. You must remember that I hope to be a useful minister some day."

"To be ordained, I think you said?"

"Yes."

"Then you haven't given up the idea? I thought that perhaps you had by this time."

"Of course not. I fondly thought at first that you felt as I do about that, as you were so steeped in Christminster. And Mr. Phillotson—"

"I have no respect for Christminster whatever, except, in a qualified degree, on its intellectual side," said Sue Bridehead, earnestly. "My friend I spoke of took that out of me. He was the most irreligious man I ever knew, and the most moral. And intellect at Christminster is new wine in old bottles. The mediævalism of Christminster must go, be sloughed off, or Christminster itself will have to go. To be sure, at times one couldn't help having a sneaking liking for the traditions of the old faith, as preserved by a section of the thinkers there in touching and simple sincerity; but when I was in my saddest, rightest, mind I always felt,

"'O ghastly glories of saints, dead limbs of gibbeted Gods!'". . .

"Sue, you are not a good friend of mine to talk like that!"

"Then I won't, dear Jude!" The emotional throat-note had come back, and she turned her face away.

"I still think Christminster has much that is glorious, though I was resentful because I couldn't get there." He spoke gently, and resisted his impulse to pique her on to tears.

"It is an ignorant place, except as to the townspeople, artisans, drunkards, and paupers," she said, hurt still at his differing from her. "*They* see life as it is, of course; but few of the people in the colleges do. You prove it in your own person. You are one of the very men Christminster was intended for when the colleges were founded; a man with a passion for learning, but no money, or opportu-

nities, or friends. But you were elbowed off the pavement by the millionaires' sons."

"Well, I can do without what it confers. I care for something higher."

"And I for something broader, truer," she insisted. "At present intellect in Christminster is pushing one way and religion the other; and so they stand stockstill, like two rams butting each other."

"What would Mr. Phillotson—"

"It is a place full of fetichists and ghost-seers!"

He noticed that whenever he tried to speak of the school-master she turned the conversation to some generalizations about the offending University. Jude was extremely, morbidly, curious about her life as Phillotson's *protégée* and betrothed; yet she would not enlighten him.

"Well, that's just what I am, too," he said. "I am fearful of life, spectre-seeing always."

"But you are good and dear!" she murmured.

His heart bumped, and he made no reply.

"You are in the Tractarian stage just now, are you not?" she added, putting on flippancy to hide real feeling, a common trick with her. "Let me see—when was I there?—In the year eighteen hundred and—"

"There's a sarcasm in that which is rather unpleasant to me, Sue. Now will you do what I want you to? At this time I read a chapter, and then say prayers, as I told you. Now will you concentrate your attention on any book of these you like, and sit with your back to me, and leave me to my custom? You are sure you won't join me?"

"I'll look at you."

"No. Don't tease, Sue!"

"Very well—I'll do just as you bid me, and I won't vex you, Jude," she replied, in the tone of a child who was going to be good forever after, turning her back upon him accordingly. A small Bible other than the one he used

lay near her, and during his retreat she took it up, and turned over the leaves.

"Jude," she said, brightly, when he had finished and come back to her, "will you let me make you a *new* New Testament, like the one I made for myself at Christminster?"

"Oh yes. How was that made?"

"I altered my old one by cutting up all the Epistles and Gospels into separate *brochures*, and rearranging them in chronological order as written, beginning the book with Romans, following on with the early Epistles, and putting the Gospels much further on. Then I had the volume rebound. My University friend Mr. —— (but never mind his name, poor boy) said it was an excellent idea. I know that reading it afterwards made it twice as interesting as before, and twice as understandable."

"H'm!" said Jude, with a sense of sacrilege.

"And what a literary enormity this is," she said, as she glanced into the pages of Solomon's Song. "I mean the synopsis at the head of each chapter, explaining away the real nature of that rhapsody. You needn't be alarmed: nobody claims inspiration for the chapter headings. Indeed, many divines treat them with contempt. It seems the drollest thing to think of the four-and-twenty elders, or bishops, or whatever number they were, sitting with long faces and writing down such misinformation."

Jude looked pained. "You are quite Voltairean!" he murmured.

"Indeed? Then I won't say any more, except that people have no right to falsify the Bible! I *hate* such humbug as could attempt to plaster over with ecclesiastical abstractions such ecstatic, natural, human love as lies in that great and passionate song!" Her speech had grown spirited, and almost petulant at his rebuke, and her eyes moist. "I *wish* I had a friend here to support me; but nobody is ever on my side!"

"But, my dear Sue, my very dear Sue, I am not against

you!" he said, taking her hand, and surprised at her introducing personal feeling into mere argument.

"Yes, you are—yes, you are!" she cried, turning away her face that he might not see her brimming eyes. "You are on the side of the people in the Training-School — at least, you seem almost to be! What I insist on is, that to explain such verses as this: 'Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women?' by the note: '*The Church professeth her faith*' is supremely ridiculous!"

"Well, then, let it be! You make such a personal matter of everything! I am — only too inclined just now to apply the words profanely. You know, *you* are fairest among women to me, come to that!"

"But you are not to say it now!" Sue replied, her voice changing to its softest note of severity. Then their eyes met, and they shook hands like cronies in a tavern, and Jude saw the absurdity of quarrelling on such a hypothetical subject, and she the silliness of crying about what was written in an old book like the Bible.

"I won't disturb your convictions — I really won't!" she went on soothingly, for now he was rather more ruffled than she. "But I did want and long to ennoble some man to high aims; and when I saw you, and knew you wanted to be my comrade, I—shall I confess it?—thought that man might be you. But you take so much tradition on trust that I don't know what to say."

"Well, dear, I suppose one must take some things on trust. Life isn't long enough to work out everything in Euclid problems before you believe it. I take Christianity."

"Well, perhaps you might take something worse."

"Indeed I might. Perhaps I have done so." He thought of Arabella.

"I won't ask what, because we are going to be *very* nice with each other, aren't we, and never, never vex each other any more?" She looked up trustfully, and her voice seemed trying to nestle in his breast.

"I shall always care for you!" said Jude.

"And I for you. Because you are single-hearted, and forgiving to your faulty and tiresome little Sue!"

He looked away, for that epicene tenderness of hers was too harrowing. Was it that which had broken the heart of the poor leader-writer; and was he to be the next one? . . . But Sue was so dear! . . . If he could only get over the sense of her sex, as she seemed to be able to do so easily of his, what a comrade she would make; for their difference of opinion on conjectural subjects only drew them closer together on matters of daily human experience. She was nearer to him than any other woman he had ever met, and he could scarcely believe that time, creed, or absence would ever divide him from her.

But his grief at her incredulities returned. They sat on till she fell asleep again, and he nodded in his chair likewise. Whenever he aroused himself he turned her things, and made up the fire anew. About six o'clock he awoke completely, and, lighting a candle, found that her clothes were dry. Her chair being a far more comfortable one than his, she still slept on, inside his great-coat, looking warm as a new bun and boyish as a Ganymedes. Placing the garments by her, and touching her on the shoulder, he went down-stairs and washed himself by starlight in the yard.

V

When he returned she was dressed as usual.

"Now could I get out without anybody seeing me?" she asked. "The town is not yet astir."

"But you have had no breakfast?"

"Oh, I don't want any! I fear I ought not to have run away from that school! Things seem so different in the cold light of morning, don't they? What Mr. Phillotson will say I don't know! It was quite by his wish that I went there. He is the only man in the world for whom I have any respect or fear. I hope he'll forgive me; but he'll scold me dreadfully, I expect!"

"I'll go to him and explain—" began Jude.

"Oh no, you sha'n't. I don't care for him! He may think what he likes—I shall do just as I choose!"

"But you just this moment said—"

"Well, if I did, I shall do as I like for all him! I have thought of what I shall do—go to the sister of one of my fellow-students in the Training-School, who has asked me to visit her. She has a school near Shaston, about eighteen miles from here—and I shall stay there till this has blown over, and I get back to the Training-School again."

At the last moment he persuaded her to let him make her a cup of coffee, in a portable apparatus he kept in his room for use on rising to go to his work every day before the household was astir.

"Now a dew-bit to eat with it," he said, "and off we go. You can have a regular breakfast when you get there."

They went quietly out of the house, Jude accompanying her to the station. As they departed along the street a head was softly thrust out of an upper window, and quickly withdrawn. Sue still seemed sorry for her rashness, and to wish she had not rebelled, telling him at parting that she would let him know as soon as she got readmitted to the Training-School. They stood rather miserably together on the platform, and it was apparent that he wanted to say more.

"I want to tell you something—two things," he said, hurriedly, as the train came up. "One is a warm one, the other a cold one!"

"Jude," she said, "I know one of them. And you mustn't!"

"What?"

"You mustn't love me. You are to like me—that's all!"

Jude's face became so full of complicated glooms that hers was agitated in sympathy as she bade him adieu through the carriage window. And then the train moved on, and, waving her pretty hand to him, she vanished away.

Melchester was a dismal place enough for Jude that Sunday of her departure, and the Close so hateful that he did not go once to the Cathedral services. The next morning there came a letter from her, which, with her usual promptitude, she had written directly she had reached her friend's house. She told him of her safe arrival and comfortable quarters, and then added:

"What I really write about, dear Jude, is something I said to you at parting. You had been so very good and kind to me that when you were out of sight I felt what a cruel and ungrateful woman I was to say it, and it has reproached me ever since. *If you want to love me, Jude, you may:* I don't mind at all; and I'll never say again that you mustn't!

"Now I won't write any more about that. You do forgive your thoughtless friend for her cruelty? and won't make her miserable by saying you don't?—Ever, SUE."

It would be superfluous to say what his answer was, and how he thought what he would have done had he been free, which should have rendered a long residence with a female friend quite unnecessary for Sue. He felt he might have been pretty sure of his own victory, if it had come to a conflict between Phillotson and himself for the possession of her.

Yet Jude was in danger of attaching more meaning to Sue's impulsive note than it really was intended to bear.

After the lapse of a few days he found himself hoping that she would write again. But he received no further communication; and, in the intensity of his solicitude, he sent another note, suggesting that he should pay her a visit some Sunday, the distance being under eighteen miles.

He expected a reply on the second morning after despatching his missive; but none came. The third morning arrived; the postman did not stop. This was Saturday, and in a feverish state of anxiety about her he sent off three brief lines, stating that he was coming the following day, for he felt sure something had happened.

His first and natural thought had been that she was ill from her immersion; but it soon occurred to him that somebody would have written for her in such a case. Conjectures were put an end to by his arrival at the village school-house near Shaston on the bright morning of Sunday, between eleven and twelve o'clock, when the parish was as vacant as a desert, most of the inhabitants having gathered inside the church, whence their voices could occasionally be heard in unison.

A little girl opened the door. "Miss Bridehead is upstairs," she said. "And will you please walk up to her?"

"Is she ill?" asked Jude, hastily.

"Only a little—not very."

Jude entered and ascended. On reaching the landing a voice told him which way to turn—the voice of Sue calling his name. He passed the doorway, and found her lying in a little bed in a room a dozen feet square.

"Oh, Sue!" he cried, sitting down beside her and taking her hand, "how is this? You couldn't write?"

"No—it wasn't that!" she answered. "I did catch a bad cold—but I could have written. Only I wouldn't!"

"Why not?—frightening me like this!"

"Yes—that was what I was afraid of! But I had decided not to write to you any more. They won't have me back at the school—that's why I couldn't write. Not the fact, but the reason!"

"Well?"

"They not only won't have me, but they give me a parting piece of advice—"

"What?"

She did not answer directly. "I vowed I never would tell you, Jude—it is so vulgar and distressing!"

"Is it about us?"

"Yes."

"But do tell me!"

"Well—somebody has sent them baseless reports about us, and they say you and I ought to marry as soon as possible, for the sake of my reputation! . . . There—now I have told you, and I wish I hadn't!"

"Oh, poor Sue!"

"I don't think of you like that means! It did just *occur* to me to regard you in the way they think I do, but I hadn't begun to. I *have* recognized that the cousinship was merely nominal, since we met as total strangers. But my marrying you, dear Jude—why, of course, if I had reckoned upon marrying you I shouldn't have come to you so often! And I never supposed you thought of such a thing as marrying me till the other evening, when I began to fancy you did love me a little. Perhaps I

ought not to have been so intimate with you. It is all my fault. Everything is my fault always!"

The speech seemed a little forced and unreal, and they regarded each other with a mutual distress.

"I was so blind at first!" she went on. "I didn't see what you felt at all. Oh, you have been unkind to me—you have—to look upon me as a sweetheart without saying a word, and leaving me to discover it myself! Your attitude to me has become known; and, naturally, they think we've been doing wrong! I'll never trust you again!"

"Yes, Sue," he said, simply, "I am to blame — more than you think. I was quite aware that you did not suspect till within the last meeting or two what I was feeling about you. I admit that our meeting as strangers prevented a sense of relationship, and that it was a sort of subterfuge to avail myself of it. But don't you think I deserve a little consideration for concealing my wrong, very wrong, sentiments, since I couldn't help having them?"

She turned her eyes doubtfully towards him, and then looked away, as if afraid she might forgive him.

By every law of nature and sex a kiss was the only rejoinder that fitted the mood and the moment, under the suasion of which Sue's undemonstrative regard of him might not inconceivably have changed its temperature. Some men would have cast scruples to the winds, and ventured it, oblivious both of Sue's declaration of her neutral feelings, and of the pair of autographs in the vestry chest of Arabella's parish church. Jude did not. He had, in fact, come in part to tell his own fatal story. It was upon his lips; yet at the hour of this distress he could not disclose it. He preferred to dwell upon the recognized barriers between them.

"Of course—I know you don't—care about me in any particular way," he said, huskily. "You ought not, and you are right. You belong to—Mr. Phillotson. I suppose he has been to see you?"

"Yes," she said, shortly, her face changing a little. "Though I didn't ask him to come. You are glad, of course, that he has been! But I shouldn't care if he didn't come any more!"

It was very perplexing to her lover that she should be piqued at his honest acquiescence in his rival, if Jude's feelings of love were deprecated by her. He went on to something else.

"This will blow over, dear Sue," he said. "The Training-School authorities are not all the world. You can get to be a student in some other, no doubt."

"I'll ask Mr. Phillotson," she said, decisively.

Sue's kind hostess now returned from church, and there was no more intimate conversation. Jude left in the afternoon, hopelessly unhappy. But he had seen her, and sat with her. Such intercourse as that would have to content him for the remainder of his life. The lesson of renunciation it was necessary and proper that he, as a parish priest, should learn.

But the next morning when he awoke he felt rather vexed with her, and decided that she was rather unreasonable, not to say capricious. Then, in illustration of what he had begun to discern as one of her redeeming characteristics, there came promptly a note, which she must have written almost immediately he had gone from her.

"Forgive me for my petulance yesterday! I was horrid to you; I know it, and I feel perfectly miserable at my horridness. It was so dear of you not to be angry! Jude, please still keep me as your friend and associate, with all my faults. I'll try not to be like it again.

"I am coming to Melchester on Saturday, to get my things away from the T. S., &c. I could walk with you for half an hour, if you would like.—Your repentant, SUE."

Jude forgave her straightway, and asked her to call for him at the Cathedral works when she came.

VI

MEANWHILE a middle-aged man was dreaming a dream of great beauty concerning the writer of the above letter. He was Richard Phillotson, who had recently removed from the mixed village school at Lumsdon, near Christminster, to undertake a large boys' school in his native town of Shaston, which stood on a hill sixty miles to the southwest as the crow flies.

A glance at the place and its accessories was almost enough to reveal that the school-master's plans and dreams so long indulged in had been abandoned for some new dream with which neither the Church nor literature had much in common. Essentially an unpractical man, he was now bent on making and saving money for a practical purpose—that of keeping a wife, who, if she chose, might conduct one of the girls' schools adjoining his own; for which purpose he had advised her to go into training, since she would not marry him off-hand.

About the time that Jude was removing from Marygreen to Melchester, and entering on adventures at the latter place with Sue, the school-master was settling down in the new school-house at Shaston. All the furniture being fixed, the books shelved, and the nails driven, he had begun to sit in his parlor during the dark winter nights and reattempt some of his old studies—one branch of which had included Roman-Britannic antiquities—an unremunerative labor for a National schoolmaster, but a subject that, after his abandonment of the University scheme, had interested him as being a com-

paratively unworked mine; practicable to those who, like himself, had lived in lonely spots where these remains were abundant, and were seen to compel inferences in startling contrast to accepted views on the civilization of that time.

A resumption of this investigation was the outward and apparent hobby of Phillotson at present—his ostensible reason for going alone into fields where causeways, dykes, and tumuli abounded, or shutting himself up in his house with a few urns, tiles, and mosaics he had collected, instead of calling round upon his new neighbors, who, for their part, had showed themselves willing enough to be friendly with him. But it was not the real, or the whole, reason, after all. Thus, on a particular evening in the month, when it had grown quite late—to near midnight, indeed—and the light of his lamp, shining from his window at a salient angle of the hill-top town over infinite miles of valley westward, announced as by words a place and person given over to study, he was not exactly studying.

The interior of the room—the books, the furniture, the school-master's loose coat, his attitude at the table, even the flickering of the fire, bespoke the same dignified tale of undistracted research—more than creditable to a man who had had no advantages beyond those of his own making. And yet the tale, true enough till latterly, was not true now. What he was regarding was not history. They were historic notes, written in a bold womanly hand at his dictation some months before, and it was the clerical rendering of word after word that absorbed him.

He presently took from a drawer a carefully tied bundle of letters — few, very few, as correspondence counts nowadays. Each was in its envelope just as it had arrived, and the handwriting was of the same womanly character as the historic notes. He unfolded them one by one, and read them musingly. At first sight there

seemed in these small documents to be absolutely nothing to muse over. They were straightforward, frank letters, signed "Sue B—"; just such ones as would be written during short absences, with no other thought than their speedy destruction, and chiefly concerning books in reading and other experiences of a Training-School, forgotten doubtless by the writer with the passing of the day of their inditing. In one of them—quite a recent note—the young woman said that she had received his considerate letter, and that it was honorable and generous of him to say he would not come to see her oftener than she desired (the school being such an awkward place for callers, and because of her strong wish that her engagement to him should not be known, which it would infallibly be if he visited her often). Over these phrases the school-master pored. What precise shade of satisfaction was to be gathered from a woman's gratitude that the man who loved her had not been often to see her? The problem occupied him, distracted him.

He opened another drawer, and found therein an envelope, from which he drew a photograph of Sue as a child, long before he had known her, standing under trellis-work with a little basket in her hand. There was another of her as a young woman, her dark eyes and hair making a very distinct and attractive picture of her, which just disclosed, too, the thoughtfulness that lay behind her lighter moods. It was a duplicate of the one she had given Jude, and would have given to any man. Phillotson brought it half-way to his lips, but withdrew it in doubt at her perplexing phrases; ultimately kissing the dead pasteboard with all the passionateness, and, more than all, the devotion, of a young man of eighteen.

The school-master's was an unhealthy-looking, old-fashioned face, rendered more old-fashioned by his style of shaving. A certain gentlemanliness had been imparted to it by nature, suggesting an inherent wish to do rightly by all. His speech was a little slow, but his tones were

sincere enough to make his hesitation no defect. His graying hair was curly, and radiated from a point in the middle of his crown. There were four lines across his forehead, and he only wore spectacles when reading at night. It was almost certainly a renunciation forced upon him by his academic purpose, rather than a distaste for women, which had hitherto kept him from closing with one of the sex in matrimony.

Such silent proceedings as those of this evening were repeated many and oft times when he was not under the eye of the boys, whose quick and penetrating regard would frequently become almost intolerable to the self-conscious master in his present anxious care for Sue, making him, in the gray hours of morning, dread to meet anew the gimlet glances, lest they should read what the dream within him was.

He had honorably acquiesced in Sue's announced wish that he was not often to visit her at the Training-School; but at length, his patience being sorely tried, he set out one Saturday afternoon to pay her an unexpected call. There the news of her departure—expulsion as it might almost have been considered — was flashed upon him without warning or mitigation as he stood at the door, expecting in a few minutes to behold her face; and when he turned away he could hardly see the road before him.

Sue had, in fact, never written a line to her suitor on the subject, although it was fourteen days old. A short reflection told him that this proved nothing, a natural delicacy being as ample a reason for silence as any degree of blameworthiness.

They had informed him at the school where she was living, and having no immediate anxiety about her comfort, his thoughts took the direction of a burning indignation against the Training-School Committee. In his bewilderment Phillotson entered the adjacent cathedral, just now in a direly dismantled state by reason of the

repairs. He sat down on a block of freestone, regardless of the dusty imprint it made on his breeches; and his listless eyes following the movements of the workmen, he presently became aware that the reputed culprit, Sue's lover Jude, was one amongst them.

Jude had never spoken to his former hero since the meeting by the model of Jerusalem. Having inadvertently witnessed Phillotson's tentative courtship of Sue in the lane, there had grown up in the younger man's mind a curious dislike to think of the elder, to meet him, to communicate in any way with him; and since Phillotson's success in obtaining at least her promise had become known to Jude, he had frankly recognized that he did not wish to see or hear of his senior any more, learn anything of his pursuits, or even imagine again what excellencies might appertain to his character. On this very day of the school-master's visit Jude was expecting Sue, as she had promised, and when therefore he saw the school-master in the nave of the building, saw, moreover, that he was coming to speak to him, he felt no little embarrassment; which Phillotson's own embarrassment prevented his observing.

Jude joined him, and they both withdrew from the other workmen to the spot where Phillotson had been sitting. Jude offered him a piece of sackcloth for a cushion, and told him it was dangerous to sit on the bare block.

"Yes, yes," said Phillotson, abstractedly, as he reseated himself, his eyes resting on the ground as if he were trying to remember where he was. "I won't keep you long. It was merely that I have heard that you have seen my little friend Sue recently. It occurred to me to speak to you on that account. I merely want to ask—about her."

"I think I know what!" Jude hurriedly said. "About her escaping from the Training-School, and her coming to me?"

"Yes."

"Well—" Jude for a moment felt an unprincipled and fiendish wish to annihilate his rival at all cost. By the exercise of that treachery which love for the same woman renders possible to men the most honorable in every other relation of life, he could send off Phillotson in agony and defeat by saying that the scandal was true, and that Sue had irretrievably committed herself to him. But his action did not respond for a moment to his animal instinct; and what he said was, "I am glad of your kindness in coming to talk plainly to me about it. You know what they say?—that I ought to marry her."

"What!"

"And I wish with all my soul I could!"

Phillotson trembled, and his naturally pale face acquired a corpse-like sharpness in its lines. "I had no idea that it was of this nature! God forbid!"

"No, no!" said Jude, aghast. "I thought you understood? I mean that were I in a position to marry her, or some one, and settle down, instead of living in lodgings here and there, I should be glad!"

What he had really meant was simply that he loved her.

"But—since this painful matter has been opened up—what really happened?" asked Phillotson, with the firmness of a man who felt that a sharp smart now was better than a long agony of suspense hereafter. "Cases arise, and this is one, when even ungenerous questions must be put to make false assumptions impossible, and to kill scandal."

Jude explained readily; giving the whole series of adventures, including the night at the shepherd's, her wet arrival at his lodging, her indisposition from her immersion, their vigil of discussion, and his seeing her off next morning.

"Well, now," said Phillotson, at the conclusion, "I take it as your final word, and I know I can believe you, that

the suspicion which led to her rustication is an absolutely baseless one?"

"It is," said Jude, solemnly. "Absolutely. So help me God!"

The school-master rose. Each of the twain felt that the interview could not comfortably merge in a friendly discussion of their recent experiences after the manner of friends; and when Jude had taken him round, and shown him some features of the renovation which the old Cathedral was undergoing, Phillotson bade the young man good-day and went away.

This visit took place about eleven o'clock in the morning; but no Sue appeared. When Jude went to his dinner at one he saw his beloved ahead of him in the street leading up from the North Gate, walking as if in no way looking for him. Speedily overtaking her, he remarked that he had asked her to come to him at the Cathedral, and she had promised.

"I have been to get my things from the College," she said—an observation which he was expected to take as an answer, though it was not one. Finding her to be in this evasive mood, he felt inclined to give her the information so long withheld.

"You have not seen Mr. Phillotson to-day?" he ventured to inquire.

"I have not. But I am not going to be cross-examined about him; and if you ask anything more I won't answer!"

"It is very odd that—" He stopped, regarding her.

"What?"

"That you are never so nice in your real presence as you are in your letters!"

"Does it really seem so to you?" said she, smiling with quick curiosity. "Well, that's strange; but I feel just the same about you, Jude. When you are gone away I seem such a cold-hearted—"

As she knew his sentiment towards her Jude saw that

they were getting upon dangerous ground. It was now, he thought, that he must speak as an honest man.

But he did not speak, and she continued: "It was that which made me write and say—I didn't mind your loving me—if you wanted to, much!"

The exultation he might have felt at what that implied, or seemed to imply, was nullified by his intention, and he rested rigid till he began: "I have never told you—"

"Yes, you have," murmured she.

"I mean, I have never told you my history—all of it."

"But I guess it. I know nearly."

Jude looked up. Could she possibly know of that morning performance of his with Arabella, which in a few months had ceased to be a marriage more completely than by death? He saw that she did not.

"I can't quite tell you here in the street," he went on, with a gloomy tongue. "And you had better not come to my lodgings. Let us go in here."

The building by which they stood was the market-house; it was the only place available; and they entered, the market being over, and the stalls and areas empty. He would have preferred a more congenial spot, but, as usually happens, in place of a romantic field or solemn aisle for his tale, it was told while they walked up and down over a floor littered with rotten cabbage-leaves, and amid all the usual squalors of decayed vegetable matter and unsaleable refuse. He began and finished his brief narrative, which merely led up to the information that he had married a wife some years earlier, and that his wife was living still. Almost before her countenance had time to change she hurried out the words,

"Why didn't you tell me before?"

"I couldn't. It seemed so cruel to tell it."

"To yourself, Jude. So it was better to be cruel to me!"

"No, dear darling!" cried Jude, passionately. He tried to take her hand, but she withdrew it. Their old rela-

tions of confidence seemed suddenly to have ended, and the antagonisms of sex to sex were left without any counterpoising predilections. She was his comrade, friend, unconscious sweetheart, no longer; and her eyes regarded him in estranged silence.

"I was ashamed of the episode in my life which brought about the marriage," he continued. "I can't explain it precisely now. I could have done it if you had taken it differently!"

"But how can I?" she burst out. "Here I have been saying, or writing, that—that you might love me, or something of the sort!—just out of charity—and all the time—oh, it is perfectly damnable how things are!" she said, stamping her foot in a nervous quiver.

"You take me wrong, Sue! I never thought you cared for me at all, till quite lately; so I felt it did not matter! Do you care for me, Sue?—you know how I mean?—I don't like 'out of charity' at all!"

It was a question which, in the circumstances, Sue did not choose to answer.

"I suppose she—your wife—is—a very pretty woman, even if she's wicked?" she asked, quickly.

"She's pretty enough, as far as that goes."

"Prettier than I am, no doubt!"

"You are not the least alike. And I have never seen her for years. . . . But she's sure to come back—they always do!"

"How strange of you to stay apart from her like this!" said Sue, her trembling lip and lumpy throat belying her irony—"you such a religious man! How will the demigods in your Pantheon—I mean those legendary persons you call Saints—intercede for you after this? Now if I had done such a thing it would have been different, and not remarkable, for I, at least, don't regard marriage as a Sacrament. Your theories are not so advanced as your practice!"

"Sue, you are terribly cutting when you like to be—

a perfect Voltaire! But you must treat me as you will!"

When she saw how wretched he was she softened, and, trying to blink away her sympathetic tears, said, with all the winning reproachfulness of a heart-hurt woman: "Ah —you should have told me before you gave me that idea that you wanted to be allowed to love me! I had no feeling before that moment at the railway-station, except—" For once Sue was as miserable as he, in her attempts to keep herself free from emotion, and her less than half-success.

"Don't cry, dear!" he implored.

"I am--not crying—because I love you; but because of your want of—confidence!"

They were quite screened from the Market-square without, and he could not help putting out his arm towards her waist. His momentary desire was the means of her rallying. "No, no!" she said, drawing back stringently, and wiping her eyes. "Of course not! It would be hypocrisy to pretend that it would be meant as from my cousin; and it can't be in any other way."

They moved on a dozen paces, and she showed herself recovered. It was distracting to Jude, and his heart would have ached less had she appeared anyhow but as she did appear—essentially large-minded and generous on reflection, despite a previous exercise of those narrow womanly humors on impulse that were necessary to give her sex.

"I don't blame you for what you couldn't help," she said, smiling. "How should I be so foolish! I do blame you a little bit for not telling me before. But, after all, it doesn't matter. We should have had to keep apart, you see, even if this had not been in your life."

"No, we shouldn't, Sue! This is the only obstacle!"

"You forget that I must have loved you, and wanted to be your wife, even if there had been no obstacle," said Sue, with a gentle seriousness which did not reveal her

mind. "And then we are cousins, and it is bad for cousins to marry. And—I am engaged to somebody else. As to our going on together as we were going, in a sort of friendly way, the people round us would have made it unable to continue. Their views of the relations of man and woman are limited, as is proved by their expelling me from the school. Their philosophy only recognizes relations based on animal desire. The wide field of strong attachment where desire plays, at least, only a secondary part, is ignored by them—the part of—who is it?—Venus Urania."

Her being able to talk learnedly showed that she was mistress of herself again; and before they parted she had almost regained her vivacious glance, her reciprocity of tone, her gay manner, and her second-thought attitude of critical largeness towards others of her age and sex.

He could speak more freely now. "There were several reasons against my telling you rashly. One was what I have said; another, that it was always impressed upon me that I ought not to marry—that I belonged to an odd and peculiar family—the wrong breed for marriage."

"Ah—who used to say that to you?"

"My great-aunt. She said it always ended badly with us Fawleys."

"That's strange! My father used to say the same to me!"

They stood possessed by the same thought, ugly enough, even as an assumption; that a union between them, had such been possible, would have meant a terrible intensification of unfitness—two bitters in one dish.

"Oh, but there can't be anything in it!" she said, with nervous lightness. "Our family have been unlucky of late years in choosing mates—that's all."

And then they tried to persuade themselves that all that had happened was of no consequence, and that they could still be cousins and friends and warm correspondents, and have happy, genial times when they met, even

if they met less frequently than before. Their parting was in good friendship, and yet Jude's last look into her eyes was tinged with inquiry, for he felt that he did not even now quite know her mind.

VII

TIDINGS from Sue a day or two after passed across Jude like a withering blast.

Before reading the letter he was led to suspect that its contents were of a somewhat serious kind by catching sight of the signature—which was in her full name, never used in her correspondence with him since her first note:

"MY DEAR JUDE,—I have something to tell you which perhaps you will not be surprised to hear, though certainly it may strike you as being accelerated (as the railway companies say of their trains). Mr. Phillotson and I are to be married quite soon—in three or four weeks. We had intended, as you know, to wait till I had gone through my course of training and obtained my certificate, so as to assist him, if necessary, in the teaching. But he generously says he does not see any object in waiting, now I am not at the Training-School. It is so good of him, because the awkwardness of my situation has really come about by my fault in getting expelled.

"Wish me joy. Remember I say you are to, and you mustn't refuse.—Your affectionate cousin,

"SUSANNA FLORENCE MARY BRIDEHEAD."

Jude staggered under the news; could eat no breakfast; and kept on drinking tea because his mouth was so dry. Then presently he went back to his work, and laughed the usual bitter laugh of a man so confronted. Everything seemed turning to satire. And yet, what could the poor girl do? he asked himself, and felt worse than shedding tears.

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"Oh, Susanna Florence Mary!" he said, as he worked. "You don't know what marriage means!"

Could it be possible that his announcement of his own marriage had pricked her on to this, just as his visit to her when in liquor may have pricked her on to her engagement? To be sure, there seemed to exist these other and sufficient reasons, practical and social, for her decision; but Sue was not a very practical or calculating person; and he was compelled to think that a pique at having his secret sprung upon her had moved her to give way to Phillotson's probable representations, that the best course to prove how unfounded were the suspicions of the school authorities would be to marry him off-hand, as in fulfilment of an ordinary engagement. Sue had, in fact, been placed in an awkward corner. Poor Sue!

He determined to play the Spartan; to make the best of it, and support her; but he could not write the requested good wishes for a day or two. Meanwhile there came another note from his impatient little dear:

"Jude, will you give me away? I have nobody else who could do it so conveniently as you, being the only married relation I have here on the spot, even if my father were friendly enough to be willing, which he isn't. I hope you won't think it a trouble? I have been looking at the marriage service in the Prayer-book, and it seems to me very humiliating that a giver-away should be required at all. According to the ceremony as there printed, my bridegroom chooses me of his own will and pleasure; but I don't choose him. Somebody *gives* me to him, like a she-ass or she-goat, or any other domestic animal. Bless your exalted views of woman, O Churchman! But I forget; I am no longer privileged to tease you.—Ever,

"Susanna Florence Mary Bridehead."

Jude screwed himself up to heroic key, and replied:

"My dear Sue,—Of course I wish you joy! And also, of course, I will give you away. What I suggest is that, as you have

no house of your own, you do not marry from your school friend's, but from mine. It would be more proper, I think, since I am, as you say, the person nearest related to you in this part of the world.

"I don't see why you sign your letter in such a new and terribly formal way? Surely you care a bit about me still!—Ever your affectionate, JUDE."

What had jarred on him even more than the signature was a little sting he had been silent on—the phrase "married relation." What an idiot it made him seem as her lover! If Sue had written that in satire, he could hardly forgive her; if in suffering—ah, that was another thing!

His offer of his lodging must have commended itself to Phillotson at any rate, for the school-master sent him a line of warm thanks, accepting the convenience. Sue also thanked him. Jude immediately moved into more commodious quarters, as much to escape the espionage of the suspicious landlady, who had been one cause of Sue's unpleasant experience, as for the sake of room.

Then Sue wrote to tell him the day fixed for the wedding; and Jude decided, after inquiry, that she should come into residence on the following Saturday, which would allow of a ten days' stay in the city prior to the ceremony, sufficiently representing a nominal residence of fifteen.

She arrived by the ten-o'clock train on the day aforesaid, Jude not going to meet her at the station, by her special request, that he should not lose a morning's work and pay, she said (if this were her true reason). But so well by this time did he know Sue that the remembrance of their mutual sensitiveness at emotional crises might, he thought, have weighed with her in this. When he came home to dinner she had taken possession of her apartment.

She lived in the same house with him, but on a different floor, and they saw each other little, an occasional

supper being the only meal they took together, when Sue's manner was something like that of a scared child. What she felt he did not know; their conversation was mechanical, though she did not look pale or ill. Phillotson came frequently, but mostly when Jude was absent. On the morning of the wedding, when Jude had given himself a holiday, Sue and her cousin had breakfast together for the first and last time during this curious interval, in his room — the parlor — which he had hired for the period of Sue's residence. Seeing, as women do, how helpless he was in making the place comfortable, she bustled about.

"What's the matter, Jude?" she said, suddenly.

He was leaning with his elbows on the table and his chin in his hands, looking into a futurity which seemed to be sketched out on the table-cloth.

"Oh—nothing!"

"You are 'father,' you know. That's what they call the man who gives you away."

Jude could have said "Phillotson's age entitles him to be called that!" But he would not annoy her by such a cheap retort.

She talked incessantly, as if she dreaded his indulgence in reflection, and before the meal was over both he and she wished they had not put such confidence in their new view of things, and had taken breakfast apart. What oppressed Jude was the thought that, having done a wrong thing of this sort himself, he was aiding and abetting the woman he loved in doing a like wrong thing, instead of imploring and warning her against it. It was on his tongue to say, "You have quite made up your mind?"

After breakfast they went out on an errand together, moved by a mutual thought that it was the last opportunity they would have of indulging in unceremonious companionship. By the irony of fate, and the curious trick in Sue's nature of tempting Providence at critical

times, she took his arm as they walked through the muddy street—a thing she had never done before in her life—and on turning the corner they found themselves close to a gray Perpendicular church, with a low-pitched roof—the church of St. Thomas.

"That's the church," said Jude.

"Where I am going to be married?"

"Yes."

"Indeed!" she exclaimed, with curiosity. "How I should like to go in and see what the spot is like where I am so soon to kneel and do it."

Again he said to himself, "She does not realize what marriage means!"

He passively acquiesced in her wish to go in, and they entered by the western door. The only person inside the gloomy building was a char-woman cleaning. Sue still held Jude's arm, almost as if she loved him. Cruelly sweet, indeed, she had been to him that morning; but his thoughts of a penance in store for her were tempered by an ache:

> "... I can find no way
> How a blow should fall, such as falls on men,
> Nor prove too much for your womanhood!"

They strolled undemonstratively up the nave towards the altar railing, which they surveyed in silence, turning then and walking down the nave again, her hand still on his arm, precisely like a couple just married. The too suggestive incident, entirely of her making, nearly broke down Jude.

"I like to do things like this," she said, in the delicate voice of an epicure in emotions, which left no doubt that she spoke the truth.

"I know you do!" said Jude.

"They are interesting, because they have probably never been done before. I shall walk down the church like this with my husband in about two hours, sha'n't I!"

"No doubt you will!"

"Was it like this when you were married?"

"Good God, Sue—don't be so awfully merciless! . . . There, dear one, I didn't mean it!"

"Ah—you are vexed!" she said, regretfully, as she blinked away an access of eye moisture. "And I promised never to vex you! . . . I suppose I ought not to have asked you to bring me in here. Oh, I oughtn't! I see it now. My curiosity to hunt up a new sensation always leads me into these scrapes. Forgive me! . . . You will, won't you, Jude?"

The appeal was so remorseful that Jude's eyes were even wetter than hers as he pressed her hand for Yes.

"Now we'll hurry away, and I won't do it any more!" she continued, humbly; and they came out of the building, Sue intending to go on to the station to meet Phillotson. But the first person they encountered on entering the main street was the school-master himself, whose train had arrived sooner than Sue expected. There was nothing really to demur to in her leaning on Jude's arm; but she withdrew her hand, and Jude thought that Phillotson had looked surprised.

"We have been doing such a funny thing!" said she, smiling candidly. "We've been to the church, rehearsing, as it were. Haven't we, Jude?"

"How?" said Phillotson, curiously.

Jude inwardly deplored what he thought to be unnecessary frankness; but she had gone too far not to explain all, which she accordingly did, telling him how they had marched up to the altar.

Seeing how puzzled Phillotson seemed, Jude said, as cheerfully as he could, "I am going to buy her another little present. Will you both come to the shop with me?"

"No," said Sue, "I'll go on to the house with him." And requesting her lover not to be a long time, she departed with the school-master.

Jude soon joined them at his rooms, and shortly after

they prepared for the ceremony. Phillotson's hair was brushed to a painful extent, and his shirt-collar appeared stiffer than it had been for the previous twenty years. Beyond this he looked dignified and thoughtful, and altogether a man of whom it was not unsafe to predicate that he would make a kind and considerate husband. That he adored Sue was obvious; and she could almost be seen to feel that she was undeserving his adoration.

Although the distance was so short, he had hired a fly from the Red Lion, and six or seven women and children had gathered by the door when they came out. The school-master and Sue were unknown, though Jude was getting to be recognized as a citizen; and the couple were judged to be some relations of his from a distance, nobody supposing Sue to have been a recent pupil at the Training-School.

In the carriage Jude took from his pocket his extra little wedding-present, which turned out to be two or three yards of white tulle, which he threw over her, bonnet and all, as a veil.

"It looks so odd over a bonnet," she said. "I'll take the bonnet off."

"Oh no—let it stay," said Phillotson. And she obeyed.

When they had passed up the church, and were standing in their places, Jude found that the antecedent visit had certainly taken off the edge of this performance, but by the time they were half-way on with the service he wished from his heart that he had not undertaken the business of giving her away. How could Sue have had the temerity to ask him to do it—a cruelty possibly to herself as well as to him? Women were different from men in such matters. Was it that they were, instead of more sensitive, as reputed, more callous, and less romantic; or were they more heroic? Or was Sue simply so perverse that she wilfully gave herself and him pain for the odd and mournful luxury of practising long-suffering in her own person, and of being touched with

tender pity for him at having made him practise it? He could perceive that her face was nervously set, and when they reached the trying ordeal of Jude giving her to Phillotson she could hardly command herself; rather, however, as it seemed, from her knowledge of what her cousin must feel, whom she need not have had there at all, than from self-consideration. Possibly she would go on inflicting such pains again and again, and grieving for the sufferer again and again, in all her colossal inconsistency. . . . . .

Phillotson seemed not to notice, to be surrounded by a mist which prevented his seeing the emotions of others. As soon as they had signed their names and come away, and the suspense was over, Jude felt relieved.

The meal at his lodging was a very simple affair, and at two o'clock they went off. In crossing the pavement to the fly she looked back, and there was a frightened light in her eyes. Could it be that Sue had acted with such unusual foolishness as to plunge into she knew not what for the sake of asserting her independence of him, of retaliating on him for his secrecy? Perhaps Sue was thus venturesome with men because she was childishly ignorant of that side of their natures which wore out women's hearts and lives.

When her foot was on the carriage-step she turned round, saying that she had forgotten something. Jude and the landlady offered to get it.

"No," she said, running back. "It is my handkerchief. I know where I left it."

Jude followed her back. She had found it, and came holding it in her hand. She looked into his eyes with her own tearful ones, and her lips suddenly parted as if she were going to say something. But she went on; and whatever she had meant to say remained unspoken.

"SHE LOOKED INTO HIS EYES WITH HER OWN TEARFUL ONES"

VIII

JUDE wondered if she had really left her handkerchief behind, or whether it were that she had miserably wished to tell him of a love that at the last moment she could not bring herself to express.

He could not stay in his silent lodging when they were gone, and fearing that he might be tempted to drown his misery in alcohol he went up-stairs, changed his dark clothes for his white, his thin boots for his thick, and proceeded to his customary work for the afternoon.

But in the Cathedral he seemed to hear a voice behind him, and to be possessed with an idea that she would come back. She could not possibly go home with Phillotson, he fancied. The feeling grew and stirred. The moment that the clock struck the last of his working hours he threw down his tools and rushed homeward. "Has anybody been for me?" he asked.

Nobody had been there.

As he could claim the down-stairs sitting-room till twelve o'clock that night he sat in it all the evening; and even when the clock had struck eleven, and the family had retired, he could not shake off the feeling that she would come back and sleep in the little room adjoining his own, in which she had slept so many previous days. Her actions were always unpredicable; why should she not come? Gladly would he have compounded for the denial of her as a sweetheart and wife by having her live thus as a fellow-lodger and friend, even on the most distant terms. His supper still remained spread; and going to the front door, and softly setting it open, he re-

turned to the room and sat as watchers sit on Old-Midsummer eves, expecting the phantom of the Beloved. But she did not come.

Having indulged in this wild hope, he went up-stairs and looked out of the window, and pictured her through the evening journey to London, whither she and Phillotson had gone for their holiday; their rattling along through the damp night to their hotel, under the same sky of ribbed cloud as that he beheld, through which the moon showed its position rather than its shape, and one or two of the larger stars made themselves visible as faint nebulæ only. It was a new beginning of Sue's history. He projected his mind into the future, and saw her with children more or less in her own likeness around her. But the consolation of regarding them as a continuation of her identity was denied to him, as to all such dreamers, by the wilfulness of Nature in not allowing issue from one parent alone. Every desired renewal of an existence is debased by being half alloy. "If at the estrangement or death of my lost love, I could go and see her child—hers solely—there would be comfort in it!" said Jude. And then he again uneasily saw, as he had latterly seen with more and more frequency, the scorn of Nature for man's finer emotions, and her lack of interest in his aspirations.

The oppressive strength of his affection for Sue showed itself on the morrow and following days yet more clearly. He could no longer endure the light of the Melchester lamps; the sunshine was as drab paint; and the blue sky as zinc. Then he received news that his old aunt was dangerously ill at Marygreen, which intelligence almost coincided with a letter from his former employer at Christminster, who offered him permanent work of a good class if he would come back. The letters were almost a relief to him. He started to visit Aunt Drusilla, and resolved to go onward to Christminster to see what worth there might be in the builder's offer.

Jude found his aunt even worse than the communication from the Widow Edlin had led him to expect. There was every possibility of her lingering on for weeks or months, though little likelihood. He wrote to Sue, informing her of the state of her aunt, and suggesting that she might like to see her aged relative alive. He would meet her at Alfredston Road the following evening, Monday, on his way back from Christminster, if she could come by the up-train which crossed his down-train at that station. Next morning, accordingly, he went on to Christminster, intending to return to Alfredston soon enough to keep the suggested appointment with Sue.

The city of learning wore an estranged look, and he had lost all feeling for its associations. Yet as the sun made vivid lights and shades of the mullioned architecture of the façades, and drew patterns of the crinkled battlements on the young turf of the quadrangles, Jude thought he had never seen the place look more beautiful. He came to the street in which he had first beheld Sue. The chair she had occupied when, leaning over her ecclesiastical scrolls, a hog-hair brush in her hand, her girlish figure had arrested the gaze of his inquiring eyes, stood precisely in its former spot, empty. It was as if she were dead, and nobody had been found capable of succeeding her in that artistic pursuit. Hers was now the City phantom, while those of the intellectual and devotional worthies who had once moved him to emotion were no longer able to assert their presence there.

However, here he was; and in fulfilment of his intention he went on to his former lodging in "Beersheba," near the ceremonial church of St. Silas. The old landlady who opened the door seemed glad to see him again, and, bringing some lunch, informed him that the builder who had employed him had called to inquire his address.

Jude went on to the stone-yard where he had worked. But the old sheds and bankers were distasteful to him;

he felt it impossible to engage himself to return and stay in this place of vanished dreams. He longed for the hour of the homeward train to Alfredston, where he might probably meet Sue.

Then, for one ghastly half-hour of depression caused by these scenes, there returned upon him that feeling which had been his undoing more than once—that he was not worth the trouble of being taken care of either by himself or others; and during this half-hour he met Tinker Taylor, the bankrupt ecclesiastical iron-monger, at Fourways, who proposed that they should adjourn to a bar and drink together. They walked along the street till they stood before one of the great palpitating centres of Christminster life, the inn wherein he formerly had responded to the challenge to rehearse the Creed in Latin —now a popular tavern with a spacious and inviting entrance, which gave admittance to a bar that had been entirely renovated and refitted in modern style since Jude's residence here.

Tinker Taylor drank off his glass and departed, saying it was too stylish a place now for him to feel at home in, unless he was drunker than he had money to be just then. Jude was longer finishing his, and stood abstractedly silent in the almost empty place. The bar had been gutted and newly arranged throughout, mahogany fixtures having taken the place of the old painted ones, while at the back of the standing-space there were stuffed sofa-benches. The room was divided into compartments in the approved manner, between which were screens of ground-glass in mahogany framing, to prevent topers in one compartment being put to the blush by the recognitions of those in the next. On the inside of the counter two barmaids leaned over the white-handled beer-engines, and the row of little silvered taps inside, dripping into a pewter trough.

Feeling tired, and having nothing more to do till the train left, Jude sat down on one of the sofas. At the

back of the barmaids rose bevel-edged mirrors, with glass shelves running along their front, on which stood precious liquids that Jude did not know the name of, in bottles of topaz, sapphire, ruby, and amethyst. The moment was enlivened by the entrance of some customers into the next compartment, and the starting of the mechanical tell-tale of moneys received, which emitted a ting-ting every time a coin was put in.

The barmaid attending to this compartment was invisible to Jude's direct glance, though a reflection of her back in the glass behind her was occasionally caught by his eyes. He had only observed this listlessly, when she turned her face for a moment to the glass to set her hair tidy. Then he was amazed to discover that the face was Arabella's.

If she had come on to his compartment she would have seen him. But she did not, this being presided over by the maiden on the other side. Abby was in a black gown, with white linen cuffs and a broad white collar, and her figure, more developed than formerly, was accentuated by a bunch of daffodils that she wore on her left bosom. In the compartment she served stood an electro-plated fountain of water over a spirit-lamp, whose blue flame sent a steam from the top, all this being visible to him only in the mirror behind her; which also reflected the faces of the men she was attending to—one of them, a handsome, dissipated young fellow, possibly an undergraduate, who had been relating to her an experience of some humorous sort.

"Oh, Mr. Cockman, now! How can you tell such a tale to me in my innocence?" she cried, gayly. "Mr. Cockman, what do you use to make your mustache curl so beautiful?" As the young man was clean-shaven, the retort provoked a laugh at his expense.

"Come!" said he, "I'll have a Curaçoa; and a light, please."

She served the liqueur from one of the lovely bottles,

and, striking a match, held it to his cigarette while he whiffed.

"Well, have you heard from your husband lately, my dear?" he asked.

"Not a sound," said she.

"Where is he?"

"I left him in Australia; and I suppose he's there still."

Jude's eyes grew rounder.

"What made you part from him?"

"Don't you ask questions, and you won't hear lies."

"Come, then, give me my change, which you've been keeping from me for the last quarter of an hour, and I'll romantically vanish up the street of this picturesque city."

She handed the change over the counter, in taking which he caught her fingers and held them. There was a slight struggle and titter, and he bade her good-bye and left.

Jude had looked on with the eye of a dazed philosopher. It was extraordinary how far removed from his life Arabella now seemed to be. He could not realize their nominal closeness. And, this being the case, in his present frame of mind he was indifferent to the fact that Arabella was his wife indeed.

The compartment that she served emptied itself of visitors, and after a brief thought he entered it, and went forward to the counter. Arabella did not recognize him for a moment. Then their glances met. She started; till a humorous impudence sparkled in her eyes, and she spoke.

"Well, I'm blest! I thought you were underground years ago!"

"Oh!"

"I never heard anything of you, or I don't know that I should have come here. But never mind! What shall I treat you to this afternoon? A Scotch and soda? Come, anything that the house will afford, for old acquaintance' sake!"

"Thanks, Arabella," said Jude, without a smile. "But I don't want anything more than I've had." The fact was that her unexpected presence there had destroyed at a stroke his momentary taste for strong liquor as completely as if it had whisked him back to his milk-fed infancy.

"That's a pity, now you could get it for nothing."

"How long have you been here?"

"About six weeks. I returned from Sydney three months ago. I always liked this business, you know."

"I wonder you came to this place!"

"Well, as I say, I thought you were gone to glory, and being in London I saw the situation in an advertisement. Nobody was likely to know me here, even if I had minded, for I was never in Christminster in my growing-up."

"Why did you return from Australia?"

"Oh, I had my reasons. . . . Then you are not a Don yet?"

"No."

"Not even a Reverend?"

"No."

"Nor so much as a Rather Reverend dissenting gentleman?"

"I am as I was."

"True—you look so." She idly allowed her fingers to rest on the pull of the beer-engine as she inspected him critically. He observed that her hands were smaller and whiter than when he had lived with her, and that on the hand which pulled the engine she wore an ornamental ring set with what seemed to be a real sapphire—which it was, indeed, and was much admired as such by the young men who frequented the bar.

"So you pass as married," he continued.

"Yes. I thought it might be awkward if I called myself a widow, as I should have liked."

"True. I am known here a little."

"I didn't mean on that account—for, as I said, I didn't expect you. It was for other reasons."

"What were they?"

"I don't care to go into them," she replied, evasively. "I make a very good living, and I don't know that I want your company."

Here a chappie with no chin, and a mustache like a lady's eyebrow, came and asked for a curiously compounded drink, and Arabella was obliged to go and attend to him. "We can't talk here," she said, stepping back a moment. "Can't you wait till nine? Say yes, and don't be a fool. I can get off duty two hours sooner than usual, if I ask. I am not living in the house at present."

He reflected, and said, gloomily, "I'll come back. I suppose we'd better arrange something."

"Oh, bother arranging! I'm not going to arrange anything!"

"But I must know a thing or two; and, as you say, we can't talk here. Very well, I'll call for you."

Depositing his unemptied glass, he went out and walked up and down the street. Here was a rude flounce into the pellucid sentimentality of his sad attachment to Sue. Though Arabella's word was absolutely untrustworthy, he thought there might be some truth in her implication that she had not wished to disturb him, and had really supposed him dead. However, there was only one thing now to be done, and that was to play a straightforward part, the law being the law, and the woman, between whom and himself there was no more unity than between east and west, being in the eye of the Church one person with him.

Having to meet Arabella here, it was impossible to meet Sue at Alfredston as he had promised. At every thought of this a pang had gone through him; but the conjuncture could not be helped. Arabella was perhaps an intended intervention to punish him for his unauthorized love. Passing the evening, therefore, in a desultory waiting about the town wherein he avoided the precincts

of every Cloister and Hall, because he could not bear to behold them, he repaired to the tavern bar while the hundred and one strokes were resounding from the Great Bell of Cardinal College, a coincidence which seemed to him gratuitous irony. The inn was now brilliantly lighted up, and the scene was altogether more brisk and gay. The faces of the barmaidens had risen in color, each having a pink flush on her cheek; their manners were still more vivacious than before — more abandoned, more excited, more sensuous, and they expressed their sentiments and desires less euphemistically, laughing in a lackadaisical tone, without reserve.

The bar had been crowded with men of all sorts during the previous hour, and he had heard from without the hubbub of their voices; but the customers were fewer just now. He nodded to Arabella, and told her that she would find him outside the door when she came away.

"But you must have something with me first," she said, with great good-humor. "Just an early night-cap; I always do. Then you can go out and wait a minute, as it is best we should not be seen going together." She drew a couple of liqueur glasses of brandy; and though she had evidently, from her countenance, already taken in enough alcohol either by drinking or, more probably, from the atmosphere she had breathed for so many hours, she finished hers quickly. He also drank his, and went outside the house.

In a few minutes she came, in a thick jacket and a hat with a black feather. "I live quite near," she said, taking his arm, "and can let myself in by a latch-key at any time. What arrangement do you want to come to?"

"Oh—none in particular," he answered, thoroughly sick and tired, his thoughts again reverting to Alfredston, and the train he did not go by; the probable disappointment of Sue that he was not there when she arrived, and the missed pleasure of her company on the long and lonely climb by starlight up the hills to Marygreen. "I ought

to have gone back, really! My aunt is on her death-bed, I fear."

"I'll go over with you to-morrow morning. I think I could get a day off."

There was something particularly uncongenial in the idea of Arabella, who had no more sympathy than a tigress with his relations or him, coming to the bedside of his dying aunt, and meeting Sue. Yet he said, "Of course, if you'd like to, you can."

"Well, that we'll consider. . . . Now, until we have come to some agreement, it is awkward our being together here —where you are known, and I am getting known, though without any suspicion that I have anything to do with you. As we are going towards the station suppose we take the nine-forty train to Aldbrickham? We shall be there in little more than half an hour, and nobody will know us for one night, and we shall be quite free to act as we choose till we have made up our minds whether we'll make anything public or not."

"As you like."

"Then wait till I get two or three things. This is my lodging. Sometimes when late I sleep at the hotel where I am engaged, so nobody will think anything of my staying out."

She speedily returned, and they went on to the railway, and made the half-hour's journey to Aldbrickham, where they entered a third-rate inn near the station in time for a late supper.

IX

On the morrow, between nine and half-past, they were journeying back to Christminster, the only two occupants of a compartment in a third-class railway-carriage. Having, like Jude, made rather a hasty toilet to catch the train, Arabella looked a little frowsy, and her face was very far from possessing the animation which had characterized it at the bar the night before. When they came out of the station she found that she still had half an hour to spare before she was due at the bar. They walked in silence a little way out of the town in the direction of Alfredston. Jude looked up the far highway.

"Ah . . . poor feeble me!" he murmured at last.

"What?" said she.

"This is the very road by which I came into Christminster years ago full of plans!"

"Well, whatever the road is, I think my time is nearly up, as I have to be in the bar by eleven o'clock. And, as I said, I sha'n't ask for the day to go with you to see your aunt. So perhaps we had better part here. I'd sooner not walk up Chief Street with you, since we've come to no conclusion at all."

"Very well. But you said when we were getting up this morning that you had something you wished to tell me before I left?"

"So I had—two things—one in particular. But you wouldn't promise to keep it a secret. I'll tell you now, if you promise? As an honest woman, I wish you to know it. . . . It was what I began telling you in the night—about that gentleman who managed the Sydney hotel."

Arabella spoke somewhat hurriedly for her. "You'll keep it close?"

"Yes — yes — I promise!" said Jude, impatiently. "Of course I don't want to reveal your secrets."

"Whenever I met him out for a walk he used to say that he was much taken with my looks, and he kept pressing me to marry him. I never thought of coming back to England again; and being out there in Australia, with no home of my own after leaving my father, I at last agreed, and did."

"What—marry him?"

"Yes."

"Regularly—legally—in church?"

"Yes. And lived with him till shortly before I left. It was stupid, I know; but I did! There, now, I've told you. Don't round upon me! He's never coming back to England, poor old chap. And if he does, he won't be likely to find me."

Jude stood pale and fixed.

"Why the devil didn't you tell me last night?" he said.

"Well—I didn't. . . . Won't you make it up with me, then?"

"I have nothing more to say!" replied Jude, with sternness. "I have nothing at all to say about the—crime—you've confessed to!"

"Crime! Pooh. They don't think much of such as that over there! Lot's of 'em do it. . . . Well, if you take it like that I shall go back to him! He was very fond of me, and we lived honorable enough, and as respectable as any married couple in the Colony! How did I know where you were?"

"I won't go blaming you. I could say a good deal, but perhaps it would be misplaced. What do you wish me to do?"

"Nothing. There was one thing more I wanted to tell you, but I fancy we've seen enough of one another for

the present! I shall think over what you said about your circumstances, and let you know."

Thus they parted. Jude watched her disappear in the direction of the hotel, and entered the railway station close by. Finding that it wanted three-quarters of an hour of the time at which he could get a train back to Alfredston, he strolled mechanically into the city as far as to the Fourways, where he stood as he had so often stood before, and surveyed Chief Street stretching ahead, with its college after college, in picturesqueness unrivalled except by such Continental vistas as the Street of Palaces in Genoa, the lines of the buildings being as distinct in the morning air as in an architectural drawing. But Jude was far from seeing or criticising these things; they were hidden by an indescribable consciousness of Arabella's midnight contiguity, a sense of degradation at his revived experiences with her, of her appearance as she lay asleep at dawn, which set upon his motionless face a look as of one accursed. If he could only have felt resentment towards her he would have been less unhappy; but he pitied while he contemned her.

Jude turned and retraced his steps. Drawing again towards the station, he started at hearing his name pronounced—less at the name than at the voice. To his great surprise, no other than Sue stood like a vision before him—her look bodeful and anxious as in a dream, her little mouth nervous, and her strained eyes speaking reproachful inquiry.

"Oh, Jude—I am so glad—to meet you like this!" she said, in quick, uneven accents not far from a sob. Then she flushed as she observed his thought that they had not met since her marriage.

They looked away from each other to hide their emotion, took each other's hand without further speech, and went on together a while, till she glanced at him with furtive solicitude. "I arrived at Alfredston station last night, as you asked me to, and there was nobody to meet

me. But I reached Marygreen alone, and they told me aunt was a trifle better. I sat up with her, and as you did not come all night I was frightened about you — I thought that perhaps, when you found yourself back in the old city, you were upset at—at thinking I was—married, and not there as I used to be; and that you had nobody to speak to; so you had tried to drown your gloom! —as you did at that former time when you were disappointed about entering as a student, and had forgotten your promise to me that you never would again. And this, I thought, was why you hadn't come to meet me!"

"And you came to hunt me up, and deliver me, like a good angel!"

"I thought I would come by the morning train and try to find you—in case—in case—"

"I did think of my promise to you, dear, continually! I shall never break out again as I did, I am sure. I may have been doing nothing better, but I was not doing that —I loathe the thought of it."

"I am glad your staying had nothing to do with that. But," she said, the faintest pout entering into her tone, "you didn't come back last night and meet me, as you engaged to!"

"I didn't—I am sorry to say. I had an appointment at nine o'clock—too late for me to catch the train that would have met yours, or to get home at all."

Looking at his loved one as she appeared to him now, in his tender thought the sweetest and most disinterested comrade that he had ever had, living largely in vivid imaginings, so ethereal a creature that her spirit could be seen trembling through her limbs, he felt heartily ashamed of his earthliness in spending the hours he had spent in Arabella's company. There was something rude and immoral in thrusting these recent facts of his life upon the mind of one who, to him, was so uncarnate as to seem at times impossible as a human wife to any average man. And yet she was Phillotson's. How she had become

such, how she lived as such, passed his comprehension as he regarded her to-day.

"You'll go back with me?" he said. "There's a train just now. I wonder how my aunt is by this time. . . . And so, Sue, you really came on my account all this way! At what an early time you must have started, poor thing!"

"Yes. Sitting up watching alone made me all nerves for you, and instead of going to bed when it got light I started. And now you won't frighten me like this again about your morals for nothing?"

He was not so sure that she had been frightened about his morals for nothing. He released her hand till they had entered the train—it seemed the same carriage he had lately got out of with another—where they sat down side by side, Sue between him and the window. He regarded the delicate lines of her profile, and the small, tight, apple-like curves of her bodice, so different from Arabella's amplitudes. Though she knew he was looking at her she did not turn to him, but kept her eyes forward, as if afraid that by meeting his own some troublous discussion would be initiated.

"Sue—you are married now, you know, like me; and yet we have been in such a hurry that we have not said a word about it!"

"There's no necessity," she quickly returned.

"Oh, well—perhaps not. . . . But I wish—"

"Jude — don't talk about *me*—I wish you wouldn't!" she entreated. "It distresses me, rather. Forgive my saying it! . . . Where did you stay last night?"

She had asked the question in perfect innocence, to change the topic. He knew that, and said, merely, "At an inn," though it would have been a relief to tell her of his meeting with an unexpected one. But the latter's final announcement of her marriage in Australia bewildered him lest what he might say should do his ignorant wife an injury.

Their talk proceeded but awkwardly till they reached

Alfredston. That Sue was not as she had been, but was labelled "Phillotson," paralyzed Jude whenever he wanted to commune with her as an individual. Yet she seemed unaltered—he could not say why. There remained the five-mile extra journey into the country, which it was just as easy to walk as to drive, the greater part of it being uphill. Jude had never before in his life gone that road with Sue, though he had with another. It was now as if he carried a bright light, which temporarily banished the shady associations of the earlier time.

Sue talked; but Jude noticed that she still kept the conversation from herself. At length he inquired if her husband were well.

"Oh yes," she said. "He is obliged to be in the school all the day, or he would have come with me. He is so good and kind that to accompany me he would have dismissed the school for a day, even against his principles—for he is strongly opposed to giving casual holidays—only I wouldn't let him. I felt it would be better to come alone. Aunt Drusilla, I knew, was so very eccentric; and his being almost a stranger to her now would have made it irksome to both. Since it turns out that she is hardly conscious, I am glad I did not ask him."

Jude had walked moodily while this praise of Phillotson was being expressed. "Mr. Phillotson obliges you in everything, as he ought," he said.

"Of course."

"You ought to be a happy wife."

"And of course I am."

"Bride, I might almost have said, as yet. It is not so many weeks since I gave you to him, and—"

"Yes—I know, I know!" There was something in her face which belied her late assuring words, so strictly proper and so lifelessly spoken that they might have been taken from a list of model speeches in *The Wife's Guide to Conduct*. Jude knew the quality of every vibration in Sue's voice, could read every symptom of her mental

condition; and he was convinced that she was unhappy, although she had not been a month married. But her rushing away thus from home, to see the last of a relative whom she had hardly known in her life, proved nothing, for Sue naturally did such things as those.

"Well, you have my good wishes now, as always, Mrs. Phillotson."

She reproached him by a glance.

"No, you are not Mrs. Phillotson," murmured Jude. "You are dear, free Sue Bridehead, only you don't know it. Wifedom has not yet annihilated and digested you in its vast maw as an atom which has no further individuality."

Sue put on a look of being offended, till she answered, "Nor has husbandom you, so far as I can see!"

"But it has!" he said, shaking his head sadly.

When they reached the lone cottage under the firs, between the Brown House and Marygreen, in which Jude and Arabella had lived and quarrelled, he turned to look at it. A squalid family lived there now. He could not help saying to Sue: "That's the house my wife and I occupied the whole of the time we lived together. I brought her home to that house."

She looked at it. "That to you was what the schoolhouse at Shaston is to me."

"Yes; but I was not very happy there, as you are in yours."

She closed her lips in retortive silence, and they walked some way till she glanced at him to see how he was taking it. "Of course I may have exaggerated your happiness—one never knows," he continued, blandly.

"Don't think that, Jude, for a moment, even though you may have said it to sting me. He's as good to me as a man can be, and gives me perfect liberty—which elderly husbands don't do in general. . . . If you think I am not happy because he's too old for me, you are wrong."

"I don't think anything against him—to you, dear."

"And you won't say things to distress me, will you?"

"I will not."

He said no more, but he knew that, from some cause or other, in taking Phillotson as a husband, Sue felt that she had done what she ought not to have done.

They plunged into the concave field, on the other side of which rose the village—the field wherein Jude had received a thrashing from the farmer many years earlier. On ascending to the village and approaching the house they found Mrs. Edlin standing at the door, who at sight of them lifted her hands deprecatingly. "She's downstairs, if you'll believe me!" cried the widow. "Out o' bed she got, and nothing could turn her. What will come o't I do not know!"

On entering, there indeed by the fireplace sat the old woman, wrapped in blankets, and turning upon them a countenance like that of Sebastiano's Lazarus. They must have looked their amazement, for she said, in a hollow voice:

"Ah—sceered ye, have I! I wasn't going to bide up there no longer, to please nobody! 'Tis more than flesh and blood can bear, to be ordered to do this and that by a feller that don't know half as well as you do yourself! . . . Ah—you'll rue this marrying as well as he!" she added, turning to Sue. "All our family do—and nearly all everybody else's. You should have done as I did, you simpleton! And Phillotson, the school-master, of all men! What made 'ee marry him?"

"What makes most women marry, aunt?"

"Ah! You mean to say you loved the man!"

"I don't mean to say anything definite."

"Do ye love un?"

"Don't ask me, aunt."

"I can mind the man very well. A very civil, honorable liver; but Lord!—I don't want to wownd your feelings, but—there be certain men here and there that no

woman of any niceness can stomach. I should have said he was one. I don't say so *now*, since you must ha' known better than I—but that's what I *should* have said!"

Sue jumped up and went out. Jude followed her, and found her in the outhouse, crying.

"Don't cry, dear," said Jude, in distress. "She means well, but is very crusty and queer now, you know."

"Oh no—it isn't that," said Sue, trying to dry her eyes. "I don't mind her roughness one bit."

"What is it, then?"

"It is that what she says is—is true!"

"God—what—you don't like him?" asked Jude.

"I don't mean that!" she said, hastily. "That I ought —perhaps I ought not to have married!"

He wondered if she had really been going to say that at first. They went back, and the subject was smoothed over, and her aunt took rather kindly to Sue, telling her that not many young women newly married would have come so far to see a sick old crone like her. In the afternoon Sue prepared to depart, Jude hiring a neighbor to drive her to Alfredston.

"I'll go with you to the station, if you'd like?" he said.

She would not let him. The man came round with the trap, and Jude helped her into it, perhaps with unnecessary attention, for she looked at him prohibitively.

"I suppose—I may come to see you some day, when I am back again at Melchester?" he half-crossly observed.

She bent down and said, softly, "No, dear—you are not to come yet. I don't think you are in a good mood."

"Very well," said Jude. "Good-bye!"

"Good-bye!" She waved her hand and was gone.

"She's right! I won't go!" he murmured.

He passed the evening and following days in mortifying by every possible means his wish to see her, nearly starving himself in attempts to extinguish by fasting his passionate tendency to love her. He read sermons on discipline, and hunted up passages in Church history

that treated of the Ascetics of the second century. Before he had returned from Marygreen to Melchester there arrived a letter from Arabella. The sight of it revived a stronger feeling of self-condemnation for his brief return to her society than for his attachment to Sue.

The letter, he perceived, bore a London postmark instead of the Christminster one. Arabella informed him that a few days after their parting in the morning at Christminster, she had been surprised by an affectionate letter from her Australian husband, formerly manager of the hotel in Sydney. He had come to England on purpose to find her, and had taken a free, fully-licensed public in Lambeth, where he wished her to join him in conducting the business, which was likely to be a very thriving one, the house being situated in an excellent, densely populated, gin-drinking neighborhood, and already doing a trade of £200 a month, which could be easily doubled.

As he had said that he loved her very much still, and implored her to tell him where she was, and as they had only parted in a slight tiff, and as her engagement in Christminster was only temporary, she had just gone to join him as he urged. She could not help feeling that she belonged to him more than to Jude, since she had properly married him, and had lived with him much longer than with her first husband. In thus wishing Jude good-bye she bore him no ill-will, and trusted he would not turn upon her, a weak woman, and inform against her, and bring her to ruin now that she had a chance of improving her circumstances and leading a genteel life.

X

JUDE returned to Melchester, which had the questionable recommendation of being only a dozen and a half miles from his Sue's now permanent residence. At first he felt that this nearness was a distinct reason for not going southward at all; but Christminster was too sad a place to bear, while the proximity of Shaston to Melchester might afford him the glory of worsting the Enemy in a close engagement, such as was deliberately sought by the priests and virgins of the early Church, who, disdaining an ignominious flight from temptation, became even chamber-partners with impunity. Jude did not pause to remember that, in the laconic words of the historian, "insulted Nature sometimes vindicated her rights" in such circumstances.

He now returned with feverish desperation to his study for the priesthood — in the recognition that the single-mindedness of his aims, and his fidelity to the cause, had been more than questionable of late. His passion for Sue troubled his soul; yet his abandonment to the society of Arabella for twelve hours seemed instinctively a worse thing—even though she had not told him of her Sydney husband till afterwards. He had, he verily believed, overcome all tendency to fly to liquor—which, indeed, he had never done from taste, but merely as an escape from intolerable misery of mind. Yet he perceived with despondency that, taken all round, he was a man of too many passions to make a good clergyman; the utmost he could hope for was that in a life of constant internal warfare between flesh and spirit the former might not always be victorious.

As a hobby, auxiliary to his readings in Divinity, he developed his slight skill in church music and thorough-bass, till he could join in part-singing from notation with some accuracy. A mile or two from Melchester there was a restored village church, to which Jude had originally gone to fix the new columns and capitals. By this means he had become acquainted with the organist, and the ultimate result was that he joined the choir as a bass voice.

He walked out to this parish twice every Sunday, and sometimes in the week. One evening about Easter the choir met for practice, and a new hymn, which Jude had heard of as being by a Wessex composer, was to be tried and prepared for the following week. It turned out to be a strangely emotional composition. As they all sang it over and over again its harmonies grew upon Jude, and moved him exceedingly.

When they had finished he went round to the organist to make inquiries. The score was in manuscript, the name of the composer being at the head, together with the title of the hymn: "The Foot of the Cross."

"Yes," said the organist. "He is a local man. He is a professional musician at Kennetbridge—between here and Christminster. The vicar knows him. He was brought up and educated in Christminster traditions, which accounts for the quality of the piece. I think he plays in the large church there, and has a surpliced choir. He comes to Melchester sometimes, and once tried to get the Cathedral organ when the post was vacant. The hymn is getting about everywhere this Easter."

As he walked, humming the air, on his way home, Jude fell to musing on its composer, and the reasons why he composed it. What a man of sympathies he must be! Perplexed and harassed as he himself was about Sue, and Arabella, and troubled as was his conscience by the complication of his position, how he would like to know that man! "He of all men would understand my difficulties,"

said the impulsive Jude. If there were any person in the world to choose as a confidant, this composer would be the one, for he must have suffered, and throbbed, and yearned.

In brief, ill as he could afford the time and money for the journey, Fawley resolved, like the child that he was, to go to Kennetbridge the very next Sunday. He duly started, early in the morning, for it was only by a series of crooked railways that he could get to the town. About mid-day he reached it, and, crossing the bridge into the quaint old borough, he inquired for the house of the composer.

They told him it was a red brick building some little way farther on. Also that the gentleman himself had just passed along the street not five minutes before.

"Which way?" asked Jude, with alacrity.

"Straight along homeward from church."

Jude hastened on, and soon had the pleasure of observing a man in a black coat and a black slouched felt hat no considerable distance ahead. Stretching out his legs yet more widely, he stalked after. "A hungry soul in pursuit of a full soul!" he said. "I must speak to that man."

He could not, however, overtake the musician before he had entered his own house, and then arose the question if this were an expedient time to call. Whether or not, he decided to do so there and then, now that he had got here, the distance home being too great for him to wait till late in the afternoon. This man of soul would understand scant ceremony, and might be quite a perfect adviser in a case in which an earthly and illegitimate passion had cunningly obtained entrance into his heart through the opening afforded for religion.

Jude accordingly rang the bell, and was admitted.

The musician came to him in a moment, and being respectably dressed, good-looking, and frank in manner, Jude obtained a favorable reception. He was, neverthe-

less, conscious that there would be a certain awkwardness in explaining his errand.

"I have been singing in the choir of a little church near Melchester," he said. "And we have this week practised 'The Foot of the Cross,' which, I understand, sir, that you composed?"

"I did—a year or so ago."

"I—like it. I think it supremely beautiful."

"Ah, well—other people have said so too. Yes, there's money in it, if I could only see about getting it published. I have other compositions to go with it, too; I wish I could bring them out, for I haven't made a five-pound note out of any of them yet. These publishing people—they want the copyright of an obscure composer's work, such as mine is, for almost less than I should have to pay a person for making a fair manuscript copy of the score. The one you speak of I have lent to various friends about here and Melchester, and so it has got to be sung a little. But music is a poor staff to lean on—I am giving it up entirely. You must go into trade if you want to make money nowadays. The wine business is what I am thinking of. This is my forthcoming list—it is not issued yet—but you can take one."

He handed Jude an advertisement list of several pages in booklet shape, ornamentally margined with a red line, in which were set forth the various clarets, champagnes, ports, sherries, and other wines with which he purposed to initiate his new venture. It took Jude rather by surprise that the man with the soul was thus and thus; and he felt that he could not open up his confidences.

They talked a little longer, but constrainedly; for when the musician found that Jude was a poor man his manner changed from what it had been while Jude's appearance and address deceived him as to his position and pursuits. Jude stammered out something about his feelings in wishing to congratulate the author on such an exalted composition, and took an embarrassed leave.

All the way home by the slow Sunday train, sitting in the fireless waiting-rooms on this cold spring day, he was depressed enough at his simplicity in taking such a journey. But no sooner did he reach his Melchester lodging than he found awaiting him a letter which had arrived that morning a few minutes after he had left the house. It was a contrite little note from Sue, in which she said, with sweet humility, that she felt she had been horrid in telling him he was not to come to see her; that she despised herself for having been so conventional; and that he was to be sure to come by the eleven-forty-five train that very Sunday, and have dinner with them at half-past one.

Jude almost tore his hair at having missed this letter till it was too late to act upon its contents; but he had chastened himself considerably of late, and at last his chimerical expedition to Kennetbridge really did seem to have been another special intervention of Providence to keep him away from temptation. But a growing impatience of faith, which he had noticed in himself more than once of late, made him pass over in ridicule the idea that God sent people on fools' errands. He longed to see her; he was angry at having missed her; and he wrote instantly, telling her what had happened, and saying he had not enough patience to wait till the following Sunday, but would come any day in the week that she liked to name.

Since he wrote a little over-ardently, Sue, as her manner was, delayed her reply till Thursday before Good Friday, when she said he might come that afternoon if he wished, this being the earliest day on which she could welcome him, for she was now assistant-teacher in her husband's school. Jude therefore got leave from the Cathedral works at the trifling expense of a stoppage of pay, and went.